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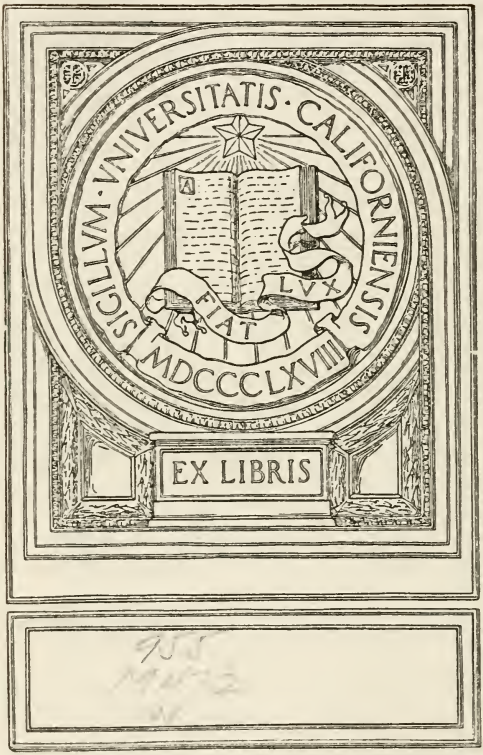
WOODBOURNE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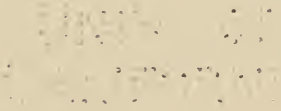
WOODBOURNE:

A Novel of the Revolutionary Period in Virginia and Maryland.

IN TWO PARTS.



BY COLONEL JOSEPH MAYO.

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DEDICATION.

TO COLONEL ROBERT M. MAYO
(of Auburn, in the County of Westmoreland, Virginia),
as a Slight Token of the Author's Gratitude for
his numberless acts of more than Brotherly
Kindness, this Volume is Affec-
tionately Inscribed.

M12017

PREFACE.

THE principal events recorded in these pages relate to the most interesting epoch of American history. The scene is chiefly confined to a little spot of that "Land within the Capes," which its first explorer has described as bearing the prerogative over the most pleasant places known. In our unambitious narrative, which is concerned with the fortunes of two or three families, we profess to deal with subjects of general public interest only as they may serve to elucidate the main design. We do not propose to write a society novel, nor yet a pure romance, nor to try and bedizen a prosy array of unimportant events in the trumpery garb of sentimental fancy. Much less shall we undertake to draw an elaborate picture of the every-day manners and customs of the ancient proverbial cavaliers of Virginia—cavaliers still in spite of the disgust which some people affect to have for the name. Yet in giving to the American public our "poor account of rich doings," we deem it eminently proper to devote a short space to the task of correcting some of the erroneous impressions of our fatherland and its inhabitants which have gone abroad unchallenged over the face of the earth. First and foremost, then, let it be distinctly affirmed that the Vir-

ginians of that day were no more Mr. Thackaray's "Virginians" than is the country in which they dwelt the same which figured in the chart of his fruitful imagination. True, their landed possessions were in several instances as large as many a petty European principality; and the owners of such vast domains were, doubtless, entitled to as great consideration as any beggarly landgrave or boorish count palatine, yet it is a figment of prurient fancy to suppose that these manorial nabobs all lived in solitary habitations twenty miles apart each from his neighbor, and surrounded by savage wilds where, as the nursery rhymer says,

> "Naked men in forests prowled,
> And bears and panthers roamed and howled."

And whatever may have been their capacity for getting over the ground, they surely were not equal to the task of performing impossible journeys over impassible roads in preposterous yellow vehicles, "carrying six insides."

In all seriousness, if the chief merit of fiction consists, as Macauley has remarked, in its resemblance to a model with which we are already familiar or to which we can constantly refer, in the name of the fairy muse what shall be said of the incongruous brood of extravagancies which one sees in the Virginia booth of Mr. Thackaray's teeming bazaar? When Colonel Henry Esmond—the only fine, real gentleman who figures in his own memoirs—sought at once refuge from villainous company and balm and solace from gout and *ennui* amid the charming solitude of his plantation in Virginia, it is certain that he found the moral atmosphere of his new

abode to be a vast improvement on the mephitic impurities of the *grotto-del-cavne*, from which he had escaped in a half-asphyxiated condition. Here, at least, he was rid of the beastly Yahoos of Vanity Fair. Here the unsophisticated country people called things by their given names. My Lord Mohun, the grand sachem of the civilized Mohocks, was rated as a consummate ruffian and knave, and the fairest of the frail nymphs of St. Germain's and Soho square was a very Hecate of moral deformity because of the shame,

> "Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
> Did spot the beauty of her budding name."

The votaries of fashion, the roues of the salon and boudoir, the maccaronis of the club-house and the gambling den, the starveling villipenders of Grub street, the swarms of seedy political pimps, panders and prostitutes, were in their eyes the same disgusting caricatures of humanity, whether paraded in Steele and Addison's polished periods, or pilloried by Pope and Swift in "Images from the dunghill and lazar house." These were the early and late associates and boon-companions of this courtly chronicler of scandalous small beer, who would make us believe that half the women in England of that day would have been most profitably employed in beating hemp in Bridewell to make "cravats" for three-fourths of the men. The world he has described is that in which the dramatic fancy of Congreve and Wycherly revelled with delight, where "the women were like profligate, impudent and unfeeling men, and where the men were too bad for any place but Pandemonium and Norfolk Island." What, after all, is this tiresome

old male gossip, but one of those "coxcomb birds, so talkative and grave," who from his cage pelts the passers-by with ribald words and scurvy jests?

> "Though many a passenger he rightly call,
> We hold him no philosopher at all."

With like indignant emphasis do we repudiate the exaggerated portraits of our good ancestors which grace the galleries of certain native artists, who appear to labor under the strange delusion that the subjects of their delineations spent the best part of their lives in stalking around the circle of stiltish, purse-proud arrogance, and swaggering in a "high-kilted" Babylonish dialect, which out-gasconaded Gascony. It is farthest from the truth, moreover, to suppose that the typical Virginian cavalier found his only pleasures in fox-hunting and cock-fighting; carousing in tap-rooms, and wrangling over cards and dice, betting at races, and whispering vapid sentiment in the ear of simpering beauty. On the contrary, he was as exquisitely alive and keenly sensitive as any "mortal mixture of earth's mold" to those lofty impressions and delicate touches of feeling and passion which elevate the soul, expand the intellect, enliven the fancy, kindle in the heart the generous flame of sympathy and love, and strew with flowers the thorny paths of life. And in the hour of severest trial, when Red Battle's stern alarum rung out over hill and dale, he approved himself a manly, robust, bold and independent freeman, who bared his bosom to the howling storm and recked not of danger and sacrifice in his country's cause. Of Toryism, as the term was applied during the Revolu-

tionary era, there was little or nothing in this part of the Old Dominion. All classes and conditions of the people were more nearly united in thought, feeling and purpose than had been the case in any civil disturbance previously recorded in English history. Still, there were not a few among the wealthy and most influential planters who dreaded to cut loose all of a sudden from the ancient moorings and set out on a voyage of exploration "in thick weather on an unknown sea." They were not able by a single effort to break the ties, "light as air and strong as links of iron," which bound them to the time-honored institutions, hoary traditions, and immemorial usages of their fathers. They cherished a fond veneration of the aristocratic and monarchical features of the constitution, for the canons of property and laws of descent, for the wholesome restrictions upon the elective franchise and the right to hold office, and in regarding the freedom and safety of the subject as the origin and cause of all laws; they nevertheless believed that the principles to which they were so ardently attached afforded the only secure bulwarks and muniments of right and justice. They read, with avidity, the letters of Junius, and applauded the burning utterances of Burke and Chatham; but they were not prepared to receive, without debate, the precepts of the sage of Gunston, nor to hear without trepidation the inspired voice of the SEER, "whose thunder shook the Philip of the Seas." As hostilities advanced, their minds were gradually changed, and they became in the end zealous supporters of the cause of American freedom. To the influence of this class—wise, prudent, high-minded and determined

men—was mainly due the auspicious result that, in the formation of the Republic, the spirit of innovation was restrained within the confines of just and rational reform.

But our "prolegomenon" is growing into a tedious historical dissertation. Not to make too sudden a "pull-up," we take occasion to repeat that in the following pages we have striven to produce a popular work of fiction which should be catholic in spirit, national in tone, free from sectional and sectarian bias and prejudice, and containing not a word or thought, hint or allusion, of questionable propriety. As such it is kindly commended to the appreciative consideration of the American people.

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WOODBOURNE.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

ONE of her own native bards has sung in mournful numbers the miseries of "hapless Caledonia," doomed to reap the bitterest fruits of the last bloody harvest of internecine strife which ripened in gory ghastliness on the soil of Britain. It is no horrid dream of phrenzied imagination, the tragic picture we are gazing upon; but the frightful reality of calamitous woe, fell-born progeny of the grisly demon of civil discord and fratricidal rage.

Scotland, indeed, was made to feel its keenest pangs; but the terrible scourge did not confine its ravages to her ill-fated borders. It carried desolation and mourning to many a happy English home, and everywhere inflicted great gaping wounds on the bosom of society, which, for long years to come, broke out and bled afresh at the whisper of some name of hateful memory and portentous sound.

Have they been wholly healed by the great physician, Time? For the sake of all that humanity holds dear, let us so hope and believe. Who so basely vile and malevolent as would wish to see again the fiery signal of insurrection cast its baleful gleam across that fair horizon, whence the genius of Christian civilization from its island throne instructs the nations in the victorious arts of Peace.

It is necessary, for the elucidation of these pages, for us to take a flying trip across the ocean. We are now in the midst of the beautiful region which has been appropriately styled the Arcadia of Scotland. The scene is a small villa near the banks of Leven Water; and time, an evening in the leafy month of June, in the year 1753. It has been raining—a passing thunder shower. The sun has just come forth from his vapory bath, and every bush and brake is hailing his reappearance with warbling pæans of surpassing melody. The fleecy clouds, all radiant with prismatic glories, are slowly trooping towards the east, and the last faint peal of heaven's artillery reverberates far down the vale. On every twig and blade of grass the pearly raindrops are sparkling bright; the air is laden with the rich perfume of blossoming flowers; on the mountains the heather blooms with a deeper purple, and the dimpling wavelets of the limpid stream dance merrily in the shimmering sunlight.

Two ladies are seated at an open window which commands a delightful prospect, embracing the most bewitching features of the extensive landscape. One is old; yet the frosts of age have not chilled her

heart, which speaks in the look of tender affection and solicitude with which she is regarding her companion. The latter lady is in the early prime and loveliness of charming womanhood. Her face wears an expression of sadness, which appears to be foreign to her natural disposition. She is resting her chin on one hand; in the other is an open letter, and her large, grey eyes, moist with springing tears, are gazing absently at the distant cloud-pavilioned crag towards which the sun is rapidly declining. To a long and earnest conversation, which was not without painful interest to the young lady, there had ensued a silence of some moments' duration. It was broken by the elder lady.

"All happens for the best, my child," she said, meeting an outburst of disappointment with the golden commonplace of old age's proverbial philosophy. "I was convinced from the first that the effort would prove fruitless; yet I did not try to dissuade you from making it, because I knew you would not be satisfied until you had done everything in your power to discover what was your brother's fate; now your mind is at ease on that account. You cannot justly reproach yourself with having left undone anything which sisterly affection and duty commanded you to do, and you will soon forget this heavy affliction in your new home, amid untried scenes and cares."

"It is impossible for me ever to forget it, dear aunt," replied the other lady; "but with God's help it shall not be the means of bringing a single pang of unhappiness to others. True, as you say, there is an end of my long cherished hope;—this letter

assures me of it; but I must beg you to repeat the story over again as Uncle Leslie heard it from the dying lips of our cousin, Duncan Campbell; I fain would impress every syllable of it on my memory in indellible characters. It may seem to be a weak and frivolous fancy to you, and I am certainly unable to explain it; yet only a witness from the grave can dispel the strange tormenting presentiment I have that my brother escaped alive from that bloody field."

"If such was the incredulous state of your mind, Ellen, after having once heard Duncan's clear story," said her aunt, gravely, "I do not see what good can come of worrying yourself with trying to remember it. However, you know best. Perhaps it may in time dispel the wicked illusion which harasses you with constant anxiety, and to gratify you, I will relate the story once more as your uncle told it to me. Poor Duncan! he was another dear victim of that sinful rebellion. Oh, those wretched times! how it makes me shudder to revive the recollection of them. I must be brief, my dear, for it is not pleasant to dwell on this painful subject. Duncan, as you are aware, was serving on the staff of his kinsman, the Duke of Argyle. He had learned that your brother, whom he loved dearly, had, in a freak of madness, left Oxford and enlisted with the Chevalier's party at Derby; and all the time the battle was going on at Culloden he was looking everywhere for the miserable boy to take him prisoner, believing that with Argyle's influence there would be no difficulty in getting a pardon for him. It was not until the battle was over, and the poor

misguided rebels were flying in every direction, that he came upon the object of his search. A little band of the bravest of Charles Edwards' followers, seeing the day was lost, had made a gallant stand in order to enable their leader to make good his escape; with them was your brother. His hat was gone, and a stream of blood was pouring from a ghastly wound on his head, and he fought as one fights who courts death on the field of battle. Brave boy, alas! alas! that he should have been reserved for such a fate." Aunt Leslie paused to wipe the gathering moisture from her eyes, while her niece, with a convulsive sob, buried her face in her hands, as seeking to shut out the horrible scene. "Duncan," resumed the old lady, "as soon as he saw his cousin, pressed eagerly towards him through the thickest of the fray. Presently, he beheld him suddenly reel in his saddle and fall to the ground; at the same instant he himself was struck in the breast by the fatal bullet and borne away lifeless, as was thought, from the field. When he returned to consciousness he found himself lying upon a pallet of straw in a farm house close to the battle-ground, and in the first words that he spoke he begged them to go and search for your brother, describing as well as he could the spot where he had seen him fall. His entreaties were promptly obeyed. A diligent search was made for the body; it was not found. Still Duncan was not satisfied. Next day, at his request, a squad of men were detailed by the Duke's order to prosecute the unavailing search, and when the officer in charge of them, who was selected by Duncan himself,

reported another failure, the poor lad at last despaired of ever finding his unfortunate kinsman's remains. His own wound was mortal; he was taken home, where he lived only a short month more. In his dying hour his mind wandered back to the terrible battlefield, and Henry's name was the last word his lips were heard to speak. And now, Ellen, since all efforts to find your brother have been in vain, we are forced to conclude, after listening to this circumstantial narration, that he was numbered among the dead on that woful day at Culloden Muir. Tell me, my love, what did John say when he heard your tragical story?"

A sudden glow, rivalling the tints of the sky she had been looking upon, mantled the beautiful face of the young lady, and her tearful eye shone with a brightness which was akin to rapture.

"Oh, aunt!" she exclaimed, "I imagined before that I loved and respected him with my whole heart, but I never dreamed of falling at his feet and worshipping him until that moment. When I saw him looking at me with such an expression of love and sympathy and tender compassion, no words can portray. I could not help crying as though my heart was breaking, while all the time it was running over with joy and gratitude. It was very weak and foolish, but he knew the cause—so noble and good, so gentle and considerate. Then we quietly talked it all over again, and agreed that it was best for the happiness of others that it should remain forever a sealed chapter in the book of our wedded lives."

"I am truly rejoiced to hear you speak of John

in that way, my dear child," replied Mrs. Leslie; "he was always a great favorite with me from a boy. You were rather slow to consult me, but he is the man of all others I would have picked out for your husband. Yet I am sadly loth to give you up, for I know I shall never see you again in this world, you will be so far away. How many miles did John say it was to Virginia?"

"He said thousands, aunt, I do not remember how many; but I feel as though I were really going to live in a world which had nothing in common with this. It grieves me sorely to think of having to part with you, my dearest aunt—you, who are the sole remaining tie which binds me to my native land. You must not then believe I am cold and unfeeling because I long to be quickly transported to those scenes I have never yet beheld, where lies my future home, together with all my hopes of peace and happiness on this earth. My mind is so constantly employed with contemplating the new career which opens before me, that I feel inspired with energies and aspirations and desires of which I have hitherto been unconscious. It is good to know that I was not made to mope and pine in indolent apathy and corroding sorrow. There is the germ of real, earnest, strong and courageous stuff in my nature—my birthright and only inheritance, which, when transplanted to a more generous soil, and fostered with loving care, will one day burst into the full flower of domestic usefulness. Hence, it is natural that I should hail with exceeding joy the approach of the time appointed for me to assume the dignity and responsibility of wifehood, and strive

to become as one whose 'husband is known in the gates where he sitteth among the rulers of the land.' For all that, dearest aunt, my heart is none the less warm for you and yours, and whatever *he* may say, I am sure there is no place in America can compare in beauty with this lovely spot."

As she spoke a bird flew down from a neighboring tree, and alighting on a spray of woodbine close by the window, carolled forth a single note of enchanting sweetness. In a moment it was gone. It had come to say good-bye to the pretty lady, and to give her that little gem of song for a keepsake.

"Nor any music like the song of the mavis, my dear," said Aunt Leslie. "Do you believe John's wonderful tales of the mocking birds in Virginia? But of course you do, and all he says about the beautiful flowers growing wild in the woods. Speaking of them, the woods, you must promise me, Ellen, not to venture to go into them unless John goes with you. It was only the other day that I heard our neighbor Smollett telling of a little girl, the daughter of a friend who was living in Virginia somewhere or Jamaica, I am not certain which, but it is all one, who had gone out to hunt for flowers in the forest, and—"

"Was murdered and scalped by the hideous savages!" cried the young lady in a voice of affected horror.

"Not so terrible as that."

"Bitten by one of those frightful rattlesnakes!"

"Not so, either; don't interrupt me, child. As I was saying, the girl was lost in the woods,

and when they found her, after looking ever so many hours, she was fast asleep under a huge tree, and her clothes were literally torn to tatters."

The effect of this fearful climacteric showed that the young lady was not wanting in a keen perception of the ludicrous.

"Why, aunt," she exclaimed, with a ringing laugh, which chased away the shadow from her pensive brow, "I was on the tenter-hooks for some awful catastrophe, and lo! and behold, it is only a story of one poor babe in the woods with the dear little redbreasts left out. Do not be uneasy on my account; the flowers may 'a' wede away' in their native wilds for me; it is the thought of crossing the great ocean which really alarms my fancy, and if I get safely through the 'vexed Bermoothes,' there is no danger of my being lost in the jungles of Virginia. But, oh! aunt, just behold the sunset; could anything be more magnificent? I shall carry that away with me among my heart's treasures, and," she inaudibly added, "the recollection of the dear, sweet face which is turning to look at it, will abide with me as a joy forevermore."

Aunt Leslie was touched.

"It is indeed a beautiful sight, my dearest child," she fervently responded. "I earnestly pray it may prove to be the emblem of the evening of a long and happy life to you."

Again the ready tears gathered in Ellen's lovely eyes. She hastily rose, and throwing her arms about her aunt's neck, kissed her affectionately; then she knelt reverently at her side. Mrs. Leslie softly

drew the sweet suppliant's head towards her until it rested on her bosom, and raising her eyes to heaven, besought its guidance and protection for the lonely orphan who was about to tempt the perils of the deep, to find among strangers, in a strange land, the haven of rest and happiness she had looked for in vain in a country where every object she beheld was tinged with the dark hue of a sorrowful remembrance.

They had remained for a short while in this prayerful attitude, when the sound of carriage wheels was heard approaching the house.

"The gentlemen have returned, Ellen," said Mrs. Leslie, "and soon the friends who are coming to take leave of you will be here. It is time you were dressing for the parlor. There, dry your eyes, and keep the rest of your tears for the hour of parting. John will expect you to wear your warmest smiles to-night, as to-morrow is your wedding-day."

The young lady calmed her agitated feelings as promptly as she could, and proceeded to comply with her aunt's injunction. But before leaving the room, she turned once more to the window, and her glance lingered in a last fond farewell on the beloved images of her girlhood's home. The next morning John Graeme and Ellen Campbell were married, and ere another sun had set they are miles away on their journey to Glasgow, where the ship was waiting which was destined to bear them safely to their pleasant home in the Old Dominion.

Twenty years or more have come and gone. The good Aunt Leslie has been gathered to her fathers these many days; but her prayers have been an-

swered. The junior partner of the famous mercantile house of Ballantine & Graeme has prospered amazingly, and Ellen has found a home which fills the measure of anticipated happiness to the very brim. They call their house Bonhill, in honor of Mr. Graeme's old friend and school fellow, the author of *Peregrine Pickle* and the *Ode to Leven Water*. It is a lovely place, and whilst we do its sweet mistress the justice to state that she does not fail on occasion to speak in becoming terms of admiration of the Arcadian delights, the bonny burnsides, the flowery braes and fragrant spreading shaws she left behind her in the Land o' Cakes, she assuredly appreciates none the less the glowing charms of this favored clime. She readily admits that the gorgeous splendors of the autumnal eventide in Virginia are enchanting beyond anything her imagination had foretold, and that the mocking-bird is a very marvel of feathered symphony. As for the wild flowers, she argues that they flourish most bonnily in their native parterres, among the rich meadows, the thorny brakes and bosky hill-slopes; but she prefers to have a garden of her own,—

> And the jessamine sweet, and the sweet tuberose,
> The sweetest flower for scent that blows,
> And all rare blossoms from every clime
> Grow in that garden in perfect prime.

But there are no dusky mountains bristling with furze and gorse; no crystal river warbling over its pebbly bed, only the wooded hills and chalky cliffs of Stratford, and the placid blue waters of the noble Potomac mirroring the bluer sky. And instead

ot the nut-brown lassie trilling her simple love-song over the pail, we can hear, if we like, Aunt Dinah's doleful baritone drowsily crooning some eldritch catch, as she lazily plies her evening care of milking the cows. The last comparison, however, is entirely gratuitous, not to say impertinent. Mrs. Graeme was happily possessed of a rare talent for music, and had diligently improved the gift, and the barbarous ditty of milkmaid, brown or black, was harsh discord to her sensitive ear.

Taken all in all, the lot of Ellen Graeme had been such as does not fall to many in this vale of tears, even when we debit the account of happiness with the sorrows and privations of her childhood's years. From the moment she set foot on the threshold of her new home until now, she had known but one great affliction, in the death of her oldest child,—a bright little blossom of three years plucked from its parent stem to deck the heavenly bowers; and she lived to see the son and daughter, with whom she was afterwards blest, grow up under her watchful eye, and become all that a mother's heart could desire. Her cup of rejoicing was then full, crowned, overflowing. Nobly had she earned the sweet reward of woman's highest earthly ambition—'her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." And John Graeme's praise was no holiday compliment; it was the constant, free, unstinted offering of tenderest love and unfailing sympathy. While he did his duty to his neighbor as a God-fearing man should do, and was in the truest sense a father to his children, to his wife he gave the unmeasured devotion of his loyal, manly heart.

CHAPTER II.

ON a bright evening in the early part of the month of November, 1775, a gentleman on horseback, approaching at a canter the brow of the gently sloping declivity which overlooks N——— Ferry, drew rein so suddenly that he seemed to have been riveted to the spot by the wand of enchantment.

Now we protest, most ungentle of critics, there is nothing in this simple prologue to provoke that derisive ejaculation. Go on with the story, and you will presently discover that our cavalier is quite another sort of person from the hackneyed creature you are thinking of. That far from being one of those fantastic images with which the genius of romance has peopled its realm of shadows, yonder solitary horseman is fully endued with the properties of mortal flesh and blood, however much he may be destined to excel the vulgar herd of human kind. Erect and motionless as a statue, he could not have assumed a better attitude were he conscious of having his picture taken by the cleverest of modern photographers. The subject is worthy the pencil of Apelles; but in the absence of the divine artist, we will try our profane hand at a rough and ready sketch.

First of all, it is evident that our traveler is decidedly youthful, as his cheek, ruddy-brown from exposure to sun and breeze, is smooth and dimpled as a damsel in her teens, and his chin is innocent of even the rudiments of a beard. At a venture, one might say he was a little the rise of twenty years old. He is a trifle larger than what would be thought the middle size at his age; his form is at once lithe, graceful and compact, and he is withal strikingly fair and comely in every feature and lineament, gesture and glance. For his dress, he is neatly habited in a fashionable drab-colored riding suit, tipped off with plain double gilt buttons, and in lieu of boots his nether limbs are enveloped in a pair of yellow buckskin leggings, which reach nighly to his hips. Like proof of unostentatious refinement is observed in the hat he has on, which is entirely divested of the tawdry embellishments so profusely worn by the young fops of the day. The accoutrements of his horse, a superb bay gelding, meet in all respects for so gallant a rider, are of simple and substantial English workmanship, without ornament of any kind. His pose is the perfection of ideal elegance and ease, betraying in every respect, from the grasp of the nervous hand on the tightened rein, to the light, airy touch of the foot on the polished stirrup, a very prince of the manége whose throne is the saddle. Gathered in a roll, and strapped behind the saddle, is a blue cloth surtout, and thus scantily equipped it is easily inferred that our cavalier is not going a very long journey. Leisure enough, too, he seems to have for indulging the poetical

sensations awakened by the glorious panorama which has broken upon him like a vision of fairy land. And surely a lovelier, softer, and more gorgeous landscape never inspired the exquisite soul of Italian art. On this particular occasion, two rare circumstances conspired to give additional charm to the scene. The evening was as calm as an infant's sleep, so that the numberless sounds of rustic music floated, mellowed and sweetly modulated, on the downy bosom of the atmosphere. Then the season had been unusually mild, and the fields and forests had not yet surrendered their rich treasures to the ravages of "chill November's surly blast"; but bedecked in all the splendor of their many hued liveries, they displayed the ecstatic harmony of colors which is the unreached paradise of the painter's despair. Here and there on the summit of a gentle eminence the gable, roof or other portion of a dwelling house peered forth from a bowery of embosoming groves, and across the open fields an occasional herd of kine soberly wended their way to the evening fold. Away in the distance the majestic "river of swans," its broad face glowing with delight, was enjoying with supreme satisfaction the interval of unwonted repose, and at your feet the modest little N———, pursuing its gently winding way round headland and cliff, appeared like a chain of silvery lakes, whose bright mirrors gave back with enhanced glory the ravishing loveliness they imbibed. Over all this scene of varied beauty the slowly sinking sun of an Indian summer spread its indescribable sheen, and earth and sky vied with each other to produce

such a masterpiece of Nature's handiwork as would have kindled adoration in the heart of the coldest skeptic.

Not many moments was our susceptible cavalier permitted to remain in rapt contemplation of this beautiful picture, for now his ear has caught a familiar sound, that, rising gradually above the drowsy hum and gathering volume as it approached, burst all at once so clear and resonant on the still air as to send the blood rushing through his veins in a torrent of wild exhiliration. Partaking the same enthusiasm, the noble courser gave a great bound forward, and before rider could recover his seat and bring the full force of the curb to bear, was speeding away in the direction of the inspiring sound.

Moralists may homilize to their hearts' content, but there is no enjoyment so intense and tumultuos to man and horse as the intoxicating revelry of the chase. Checking his impatient steed, and galloping back to his post of observation, the young gentleman reached it just in time to see a pack of hounds emerge from the cover of the forest into a large field a short distance beyond the river. In a twinkling they have crossed it, and are again lost to view in the pine thickets which adorn the river's edge with an emerald fringe. Straight after them, trailing one behind another, comes a party of fifteen or twenty huntsmen. As they cross the plain, most of those in rear come up on a line with the one in front and some pass him, so that it is now become a headlong race for the prize which woodland heroes so ardently covet.

Many a ditch, both broad and deep, traverses the field, but these are easily cleared at a flying leap by the whole chasing troop. A more serious obstacle interposes in the shape of an ugly worm-fence, high and bristling with jagged stakes and uncouth riders. At sight of this formidable barrier, all but two of the eager sportsmen prudently abate their speed and look about them for a safe gap in the fence. The twain more adventurous than the rest, or else having greater confidence in the vaulting qualities of their steeds, keep straight ahead in their hurrying career, fierce competitors for the honor of being first in at the death. They are abreast, though some paces apart. At this stage of the sport, the looker-on from the hill fairly brims over with excitement; but it does not appear, from the tenor of his exclamations, that he would have those two madcaps desist from their dare-devil attempt.

"That's Dick Alloway on the sorrel; but who can the other fellow be? No matter; ten to one neither of them makes the leap. You and I could do it, old boy," addressing his horse, which at the moment looked the image of a "fiery Pegasus;" "and we are the only pair in the county. By George! they are over it. Splendid! splendid!"

Sure enough, there they were, over the fence as clear as a whistle, and off like the wind neck and neck for the woods, into which they soon disappear. The more sober gaited of the party, having abandoned the contest for the prize, follow on each according to his whim. Presently, the blast of a horn announces the catastrophe, and as its echoes

die away along the hills a deeper quiet than ever settles down upon the scene. Huntsmen and hounds have vanished like a dream from sight and hearing, and our traveler, recovering himself, replaces the hat which he had snatched from his head in the excitement of the moment, gives the rein to his mettlesome steed, and goes on his way at a bounding pace.

Crossing the ferry, a mile or so beyond the river, just as the last rays of the sun lingered on the tree tops, he turned off abruptly from the highway he was pursuing into the depth of a large virgin forest. He had gone but a short way in his new direction, when he was startled by a noise which resembled, in thrilling intensity and prolonged horror, the war-whoop of an Indian savage; but as the last relic of the interesting race of yore had long ago disappeared from these once familiar haunts, of course the sound could not be referred to any such alarming source. Stopping his horse, he sought an explanation of the rude clamor which, judging by the effect on his own nerves, had so frightened the peaceful denizens of the silvan bowers from their propriety. He was not long in ascertaining that it proceeded from a pair of lusty lungs bawling away at a song with a stentorian gusto which set at defiance all the laws of melodious concord. The words of the obstreperous ditty betrayed the vocalist's zest for the noblest of manly sports. Here is a specimen, as near as we could come at the words:

> On yonder hill there sits a hare,
> Oppressed with sorrow, grief and care,
> Because her prospects are so bare;
> Halloo, boys, halloo!

The refrain being rendered at a pitch that made the woods to ring, and set the owls to screeching and hooting in mocking chorus. It was this unearthly diapason, which might have been likened unto the hideous yell of the lurking red devil as he springs from his lair, and the next moment the gleaming tomahawk hurtles through the air and crashes into the skull of the unsuspecting wayfarer. But to our sprightly cavalier there is something irresistibly ludicrous in the mixed concourse of diabolical sounds, and he greets the unlooked for serenade with a loud peal of laughter. Then, as the lines come so pat, he cannot forbear to shout them out at the top of his voice:

"Silence, ye wolves, while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
And makes night hideous; answer him, ye owls!"

"In Saint Hubert's name, Dickon, stop your horrible racket; you have scared the 'molly-cottontails' out of their wits." The adjuration was addressed to the owner of the enviable lungs, who now appeared to view in the person of another horseman coming along a bridle-path through the woods —a big-boned, strong-limbed, young giant he was, with such a wilderness of light-colored hair about his face and neck that scarcely anything could be seen of his features. So much as was visible showed extremely prepossessing, and the careless, free-and-easy abandon of his mien, as well as the merry light which danced and sparkled in his clear, blue eyes, betokened a heart which was on the best terms with itself, and all the world beside. He was encased in buckskin cap-a-pie, save

that he wore the stoutest of high-topped boots that ever "skelpit through dub and mire." A large silver-mounted horn hung by a cord under his arm, at his saddle bow was displayed the trophy which proclaimed him victor in the day's hunt, and a brace of fagged and foot-sore fox hounds of the genuine "black St. Hubert's breed" limped at his horse's heels.

"Why, Harry," exclaimed the newcomer, as he rode up and shook the traveler warmly by the hand, "where did you drop from; is this the way you keep promises? We looked for you to join us to-day without fail—that was your word."

"If I lived and nothing happened," replied his merry companion, whom we introduce as young Henry Carleton, of that ilk. "You may be sure it was not my fault, Dick, that I did not give you a tilt for the brush I see you have there. My father, who is just returned from Richmond, detained me all morning writing letters for him, until it was too late for me to take part in your hunt. You may see I was in trim for the fray," pointing to his nether garment.

"Well," replied Alloway, accepting his friend's explanation, "I am delighted to see you all the same, though you certainly did miss a glorious treat—just one uproarious frolic from beginning to end; men, dogs and horses perfectly frantic with delight," and with true sportman's enthusiasm, he launched forth in an animated description of the chase, as they rode on together.

"Oh, I witnessed the grand closing scene from the ferry hill," said Carleton, interrupting the flow

of Somervilian eloquence. "Tell me, who was the spruce-looking fellow on the gallant grey, who seemed to be pushing you so hard for the prize?"

"Pushing me so hard? You may well say that," replied Alloway, "for if his horse had not tripped over a hanging vine and tumbled the fine gentleman over its head, he would have undoubtedly won the race by several lengths. He wasn't a bit hurt by the fall; but you should have heard him swear at his horse in the most outlandish gibberish, as if the poor animal could help the vine's being in the way. Who is he? That's precisely what I would like to find out; none of the party knew anything about him. He landed among us right out of the clouds; pitched like fury into the sport without asking anybody's leave, and when it was over he vanished in a flash no one saw whither."

Carleton.—"What's he like, this terrible hobgoblin of the chase?"

Alloway.—"Oh, good enough looking, for that matter, if he wasn't so infernally black—I don't mean his skin, which is none of the fairest—his eyes and hair, especially his eyes—they looked like two great lumps of charcoal with the light shining through 'em, and Jupiter! how the sparks flew out of 'em when his horse threw him—like a whole blazing pile of hickory logs spitting fire all at once. One thing I must say for the fellow, he certainly knows how to sit a horse, and had he not shown a spice of the devil in his temper, I would have desired better acquaintance, instead of leaving him and his horse to settle their little misunderstanding the best way they could."

Carleton.—"Now, you have described an Italian brigand or other sort of gentleman-like cutthroat."

The big sportsman jerked up his shoulders in sign of contempt, and would have replied, doubtless, in a manner the gesture implied, had not the sharp crack of a rifle close by cut short the colloquy. At the same instant a squirrel came bounding from an overhanging limb a rod in front of them, and had barely touched the ground before a stout, half-grown stripling sprang into the road, gun in hand, and, snatching up the game, held it aloft in triumph, his face betokening the liveliest pleasure.

"Well shot, Archie," exclaimed Alloway; "from a rest, I'll wager."

"Indeed it was not, Mr. Alloway, it was a fair off-hand shot, and I did not see anything but its head, either," protested the youth, pointing to the wound behind the creature's ear.

"I only jested," replied Alloway; "it is not the first proof I have had of your marksmanship. But it is too late for another shot; come, mount behind, I am going to take you home with me."

"No, thank you, Mr. Alloway," replied the lad, "I have not been out on a regular hunt; I just came on an errand for father, and must hasten back. He says he wants you to come over early in the morning and attend to that little matter he spoke to you about several days ago; I suppose you know what it is, I am sure I do not."

"Oh, yes, I understand," said Alloway; "say to your father that I will be on hand between nine and ten o'clock, and be sure and tell your mother it was my fault that you did not get home to supper."

"Oh, I'll be there by candle-light," laughingly exclaimed the boy, as he bounded away through the woods like a deer.

"A pretty youth, Dick," said Carleton, as they resumed their journey; "who is he?"

"The very question I was asking myself for the hundredth time," replied Alloway. "Archie is a fine, manly little fellow; I wish I knew more about him."

Carleton.—"Not know who the boy is? why you seem well acquainted with his father."

Alloway.—"There's the quandary; Archie is a foster-child. If I only could muster courage to ask the collector."

Carleton.—"The collector? Pray what new riddle is that, you incorrigible sphinx?"

Alloway.—"The collector, the great exciseman, the tax-gathering plenipotentiary of our Cæsar-Augustus; who else could it be but old Jake Thompson, the most redoubtable tory inside of the capes."

Carleton.—"I have frequently heard of the eccentric Mr. Jacob Thompson, but not by that formidable designation."

Alloway.—"And you never heard how he earned the title? Ah, I remember, you were at college when it happened. Mr. Lee was addressing a large gathering of the rebellious clans at the court house, when Mr. Thompson suddenly burst in among the crowd, boiling over with indignation. He called the speaker a vile incendiary, traitor, demagogue, and the like, and warned the people not to listen to his seditious harangue. Parliament, he said, not only had the right to tax them, but ought to tax

them till they groaned; it was a glorious privilege to pay tribute to such a beneficent government, and if his blessed majesty would only make him collector-general of his dominions in America, he would teach his refractory subjects a lesson of obedience to lawful authority they would not forget in a hurry. The irate gentleman soon discovered that he was in the wrong pew; he was hustled out amid a storm of yells and hoots, and it was as much as we could do to keep the populace from giving him a chairing after the vulgar fashion. From that day he has been known by a variety of nicknames, all indicating the supreme object of his loyal ambition. Here, everybody, down to the school-boys, calls him Collector Thompson, and far from resenting their familiarity, he actually glories in the popular recognition of his zeal in his royal master's service. Once in a while he breaks out and ramps and raves like all bedlam let loose; but take him right, you will find him to be at bottom a very good kind of an old heathen—doesn't bear a particle of malice, and is openhanded and honest as the day."

Carleton.—"But what has the old tory to do with the boy?"

Alloway.—"Everything—he and his wife. Having no children of their own, they have adopted Archie; but where they picked him up, I have not the remotest idea."

Carleton.—"Another Tom Jones in embryo, very likely. Come now, Dick, who do you suppose the wild huntsman to be; for to me, he is a more interesting personage than your little foundling."

Another pronounced shrug was all the reply.

Carleton.—"A brave set of fellows, truly; twenty of you to one poor forlorn foreigner, and not one had the courage to ask him a civil question. How I wish I had been there."

Alloway.—"What would you have done? most puissant imp of valor."

Carleton.—"What would I have done? Why, first of all, I would have gone to the relief of the discomfited unknown cavalier and helped him to remount; next, I would have felicitated him, in a delicate way, on his superb horsemanship, and tendered him the prize, which an untoward accident deprived him of; and, in fine, I would have genearly dispensed him the hospitable treatment which is due to a stranger and a gentleman—common politeness, nothing more. Suppose now, this terrible person should turn out to be what I verily suspect he is—"

"No more of that, Hal, an' thou lovest me," exclaimed Alloway, retreating behind an apt quotation. "And since you speak of politeness, I am reminded to say, welcome to Woodbourne, if you have been all this while paying me that long promised visit."

"There, again, my dear friend, I am not to blame," replied Carleton. "It was impossible for me to leave home while my father was absent on that plaguey Indian business; and ever since he came back he has had me constantly at work in the fourfold capacity of scribe, amanuensis, confidential secretary, and general factotem. I am only this moment relieved of my multifarious task; my

luggage is on the way, and you are not going to be rid of me for some days."

"Only stay until you wear your welcome out, and I will overlook past transgressions," replied Alloway, in his hearty manner.

By this time they had gotten clear of the forest, and, passing through a gateway which opened upon a wide lawn, were approaching a large and comely mansion, half hidden in a tuft of sheltering trees, and perched upon the summit of what, in that country, was regarded as a somewhat ambitious knoll. This was Woodbourne, the goodly residence of Mr. Richard Austin Alloway, where he maintained, with a very bad grace, it was said, his present reign of solitary grandeur.

CHAPTER III.

MR. RICHARD ALLOWAY'S mother was an Austin. The founder of the Virginia family of that name was the younger son of a younger brother, who appears to have drifted hither towards the close of the seventeenth century. At an early period of his life he set out from Kent County, England, to seek his fortune wheresoever he could find it, and in his case the proverb of the rolling stone received a flat contradiction. His various enterprises on land and sea met with unvarying success, and he rapidly accumulated a considerable store of wealth. Jamaica was the last field of his commercial operations. Thence he removed to Virginia, having previously invested the bulk of his large means in land and negro slaves. He now abandoned mercantile pursuits, and became a planter of magnificent proportions. From this description, it is easy to infer that Mr. Richard Austin the elder was one of those solid men of whom the saw, "Better to be born lucky than rich," was written, and who, in all the mutations of human affairs, never lose sight of the main chance nor let go an opportunity to turn an honest penny. Had he devoted himself

body and soul to the service of Mammon, he would in all probability have become the reigning monarch of Change Alley, and, dying, left a pile in the funds for executorial "rooks, committee men and trustees," to squander in contingent fees and incidental expenses, to say nothing of fat salaries to countless dispensers of infinitesimal benefactions to the widow and fatherless. O, blind heaper-up of the shining hoard, why should you be so much concerned about the disposition of your toilsome gains when you yourself shall have been hutched in the insatiable grave? What difference will it make in the general account of human happiness whether

> To heirs unknown descends the unguarded store,
> Or wanders, Heaven directed, to the poor?

It was Richard Austin's son who designed the capacious dwelling that erstwhile looked down in stately pride from the crest of yonder sedgy knoll, and of which naught remains to tell the tale save a crumbling heap of bricks and mortar, and the charred end or two of a beam or rafter. It was burned by the British in the war of 1812, one of the many similar acts of vandalism of which the locality retains the proof to this day.

Mr. John Austin was liberally educated at the best schools in England, obtained a degree at Oxford, and received the extra polishing of the grand Continental tour. That he made the most of his opportunities is evident from the fact, that had he not been a man of rare talents and acquirements, he could not possibly have attained to the

honors he in after years enjoyed, having, at different times, been a member of Council, sat several sessions in the House of Burgesses, and filled, as long as he desired it, the responsible office of Presiding Justice and High Sheriff of the county. Under his forming hands Woodbourne blossomed as a rose in the wilderness, and displayed in every feature the evidences of a cultivated mind and refined taste. To this day the name recalls whatever of elegant ease, solid comfort and social pleasure found an abode within "the ancient, hospitable hall

> Whose vaulted roof once rung to harmless mirth:
> Where every passing stranger was a guest,
> And every guest a friend."

For all that the house had its skeleton. Here, as everywhere, the stream of happiness was "the torrent's smoothness ere it falls below." This picture of joy and gladness could not last for the brief space of one man's life, and the last days of Mr. John Austin's career on earth repeat the sad, sad story of the vanity of human wishes. He had but one son, the youngest of seven children, and although he was far from wanting affection for his daughters, the boy had been the principal object of his pride and care. The good dominie who held the station of private tutor in the family was not permitted to have exclusive control of his pupil's training. The fond father devoted every leisure moment to the grateful task, and deemed himself abundantly rewarded for his diligent pains. The boy was sprightly, apt and ambitious to learn, and not only did he master with ease the lessons

which were assigned him, but by the time he was seventeen years old he had read through every book of travel, history and polite literature in his father's well-stored library, and thus acquired an amazing deal of miscellaneous information. With these advantages he was sent to the college at Williamsburg, and it was intended, when he had taken the course there, he should complete his studies abroad.

In the bright annals of the Old Dominion there is no name of purer lustre than that of Commissary Blair, the pioneer of letters, to whom belongs the imperishable honor of having erected a temple where all the wisdom of the old world Egyptians could be had without encountering the perils and cost of a double voyage across the ocean. His darling foster-child was now grown to be a flourishing seminary of science and literature. In another decade it became the prolific nursery of republican genius, the fountain to which the brightest intellects of the colony repaired, and "in their golden urns drew light."

Thoroughly accoutred by previous careful preparation, Richard Austin enlisted with the fairest auspices in the earnest and jealous contests of his new arena. Among his associates were a score of ardent competitors, all eager to endure the suffocating heat and dust of the Olympic course to win the victor's crown of glory. Naturally, his disposition was the most amiable and gentle; he was ingenuous, frank and warm-hearted to a fault, and the current of his feelings and affections usually flowed in a strong, even and pellucid channel. Whilst he was a general favorite with his

fellow-students, he had especially singled out one among the number for his warmest and most intimate regard, and this attachment gradually ripened into a friendship passing the love of women.

The session was drawing to a close; the final examinations were close at hand, and the candidates for the various badges of merit vied with each other in unremitting application to their absorbing duties. Foremost in the generous race were Richard Austin and his friend, Reginald Aubrey, twin stars in the galaxy of academic distinction. In the midst of the animated contest, a marked change was observed in Richard's deportment; he grew suddenly morose and cynical, neglected his books, and went moping about in solitary despondency. One evening, while the spell was on him, he was crossing the college campus, where a number of students were playing at cricket, when one of them thoughtlessly accosted him in what he conceived to be an insulting and jeering manner. Instantly he stooped, and, seizing a large stone, threw it with all his strength at the offender's head. The deadly missile flew harmlessly past the mark at which it was aimed, to find a dearer victim, and striking poor Aubrey full upon the temple, felled him to the earth. The blow was fatal. Let us not linger on the harrowing story. The anguish and remorse of the unhappy young man were terrible beyond description; and when his father came to take him home, his sorrowful companions could scarcely recognize, in the stony image of voiceless and tearless woe around which they stood weeping, a trace of the once light-

hearted leader of their sportive pastimes, and many wondered if it were not better to be with him whom they had tenderly laid to rest in the silent grave. Ah, could he have whispered one little word, or had he even smiled in his sleep when the cry of wild, despairing agony burst from the wretched form that bent over him as he lay so cold and still upon the ground! Alas! there was no solacing remembrance—no transient gleam of compassion—no drop of healing balm in the overflowing cup of hopeless misery. Like a plummet the soul of Reginald Aubrey dropped into the ocean of eternity, and from that moment Richard Austin was rarely ever seen to smile.

Thus it happened that one flash of an angry spirit had kindled a fire which consumed to ashes as fair a temple as was ever fashioned by skill divine. O, wretched man, voyager on life's uncertain main, be not beguiled into false security because the sea is calm and the stars are shining brightly over your head. In calm and storm alike be ever watchful and circumspect. To the wary pilot the ripple on the glassy surface gives warning of the jagged reef that lurks below. Let that strong hand for an instant loose its hold upon the helm, and the frail vessel which bears your soul's eternal fortunes is engulphed in the yawning deep, or drifts, a shattered and helpless wreck on the bosom of the remorseless wave. Beware! beware! or else learn, when it is too late, that to the mind which is not already callous grown in sin there may come an anguish which cannot be wearied down, a pang which cannot be assuaged.

For weeks the grief of Richard Austin was excessive, and manifested itself in such fearful convulsions that his father inwardly prayed for death to come and release him from suffering. At length these violent paroxysms ceased entirely, and were succeeded by another form of malady, less poignant in the excruciating torture of the body, but distressing beyond measure, inasmuch as it foreshadowed the worst calamity which could befall the unhappy youth. He sunk into a deep, pervading, listless melancholy; a thick, impenetrable pall of gloomy dejection shrouded his whole being; it was the acme of the misery which "rejoiceth exceedingly, and is glad when it can find the grave." Hour after hour he sat, silent and motionless, gazing on vacancy, and when he was with difficulty pursuaded to move at all, he walked with uncertain and tottering steps, as one whose senses were completely dazed and who had lost the faculty of volition. The family physician now gravely shook his head, and frankly confessed that his patient was beyond the reach of any remedy he possessed. There was but one recourse left, he said, which promised a chance of success. He had known a change of air and scene to prove efficacious in similar disorders after the ordinary appliances of medical skill had been exhausted in vain. The advice was taken. To his father's great joy, Richard yielded readily to his entreaties, and they set out on a voyage to England. The result showed the value of Dr. Harrington's prescription. The trip across the ocean of itself wrought a miracle of cure, which Mr. Austin had not dared to hope

for; there was a precious elixir in the far-sweeping breezes unknown to human science, and when they reached their destination Richard was so far restored to health as to evince a lively interest in the unaccustomed sights and scenes around him. In a little while the cloud which hung upon his mind slowly lifted and floated away, and the light shone out again. But not with the radiance of its early beams. It was no longer the glory of the sun, sparkling with myriad hues of ever-changing brightness; but a soft, dreamy and subdued influence of moon and stars, as of a halo from another world. The beautiful visions of life's morning march, the glowing aspirations for worldly fame and rewards, the fairy forms and fantasies of young desire, each object of passionate love and eager anticipation, which had imparted energy and animation to his heart, appeared through the mystic drapery of that serene shadowy twilight of the soul, like an unsubstantial pageant fast fading from sight. The old vivacity and humor, the bounding pulse, the elastic step, the gay, soaring spirit were gone, and instead of these was a quiet, sedate, earnest and contemplative demeanor, as if the mind was constantly occupied with dark communings on subjects of everlasting import. This was, indeed, the very crisis of his fate. A deadly blight had fallen upon his prospects and fame. He had no pleasure in the diversions where happiness is usually sought. His heart was a fountain of bitter waters, and despair presented its poisoned chalice to his lips. But thanks to his early complete religious training, he, in this supreme moment of mortal agony, turned a

deaf ear to the voice of the tempter, and taking up his heavy cross bore it with unmurmuring patience to the end.

Richard Austin had remained abroad scarcely a year, when he was summoned home by the illness of his father. Here he arrived in time to close the dying eyes of his only parent, and a few months afterwards he was called upon to perform the same sad task in the case of the unmarried oldest sister, who had been to him from infancy in the place of the mother he had never seen. Of his remaining sisters, Mrs. Alloway alone resided in the vicinity of Woodbourne; the others were scattered far and wide over the colony. All of them were happily married, and did not require his aid and protection. So, having arranged his affairs, and given all needful instructions to his overseer, he locked up the house, handed the key to the faithful old butler, and once again crossed the Atlantic, this time to become an aimless and solitary wanderer in foreign lands. He left an address with Mrs. Alloway where letters would reach him, but he did not answer one of the many which she, with true sisterly affection, continued to write all the same as though he had been the most punctual of correspondents.

Years rolled by, and still no tidings came from him, nor could the persistent inquiries of the friends who, from time to time, visited Europe discover the faintest trace of his footsteps. His secret was known to but two bosoms, by whom it was held in the close embrace of professional confidence—that of the old lawyer who had been his father's most

intimate friend and counsellor in his private and public affairs, and of his agent in London.

Mrs. Alloway went regularly to Woodbourne four or five times a year to make a thorough inspection of the premises, and especially to see that the flowers were properly cared for, and the fruit trees did not suffer for want of pruning. To her the old place was always home, and nowhere else did the roses and dahlias bloom so gorgeously, nor the plums and apricots hang with such tempting lusciousness. On these visits she was accompanied by the children, in whose eyes grandfather's house, as they called it, was a miracle of magnificence, which laughed Aladdin's palace to scorn. What a merry sight it was, to see these little elves drop suddenly from the clouds, and put to rout the legions of grim spectres lurking there in that sombre and forsaken abode. How they scampered through the house, chased around the lawn, tumbled over the flower-beds, climbed the cherry trees, swung upon the garden gate, ransacked the poultry yard, performed every imaginable mischievous antic, and raised such a din about the ears of Uncle George Hamilton, the sable factotum in charge, that he wished them a thousand times in Jericho, and wondered what Miss Jane could have been thinking about to fetch them there to "towse and mummock things to pieces that sort o' way." But Miss Jane did not pay the slightest attention to the grand airs of her brother's prime minister, and the children gamboled on in unrebuked gleefulness.

Master Richard Austin Alloway was now a great,

gawky, hobble-de-hoy urchin, with a freckled face, a tangled shock of sandy hair, a small flock of goslings in his voice, and a superabundance of good humor and animal spirits. He had learned to ride and shoot, to fish and hunt, and to swim like a duck, to bridle a three-year old, and break him, too, to worm a dog, and phlegm a horse—in a word, he was a very prince of the tribe of Nimrod, and the Admirable Crichton of rustic accomplishments. Of the nectared sweets of learning, he does appear to have been particularly fond, being like other truants given to exclaim, *jam satis*, before testing the fact whether crude surfeit reigned in repletion. In Latin, Cæsar's bridge was an everlasting stumbling block, and as for Greek, the very alphabet was the quintessence of foolishness. But although he was not on speaking terms with the heroes of Homer and Virgil, he was well up in English history, and had by heart the entire catalogue of British celebrities, from Boadicca, warlike queen, to Captain James Cook, the latest wonder of the world. Moreover, he knew perfectly well that the world was round like a ball, and not flat, like a pan-cake; that the old turn and turn about theory was all gammon, and that the earth revolved on its own "axle-tree" once in twenty-four hours, and circumgyrated round the sun in three hundred and sixty-five days and a fraction over, which explained all about night and day, and winter and summer, and led to the invention of the mariner's compass and the discovery of America! Add to the list a familiar acquaintance with the exploits of "Jack-the-Giant-Killer," the wonders of the

"Arabian Nights," the adventures of "Robinson Crusoe," and such knowledge of the Episcopal catechism as a pious mother's unremitting care did not fail to supply, and this inventory of Master Dick's then acquirements is well nigh complete.

The fields and forests of Woodbourne were a favorite resort of this young poacher, and if, which was rarely the case, he did not succeed in filling his game-bag, he was sure to come back with his pockets groaning with the spoils of the orchard. There were no interdicted preserves in this part of the colony, and the sportsman was free to roam and ravage at will; yet there was an illusion of forbidden pleasure to Richard in thus trespassing on his uncle's domain, from the fact that it was highly displeasing to the august functionary we have spoken of, who looked upon it as an offence, nothing short of *leze majestie* to shoot a squirrel in the gum-spring woods!

One day, towards the end of the month of October, 1770, Richard had started with his gun and dog on one of these predatory excursions to Woodbourne, saying, as usual, that they might not look for him before supper time. He had been gone but a few hours, when he came hurriedly back in a great flurry of excitement, and startled his mother with the intelligence that he had seen a strange person walking on the lawn, and had stood and watched him ever so long, and saw him go across to the graveyard and pull one of the flowers she said nobody was to touch, and how he was dressed in a rich suit of black velvet and walked with a cane, and seemed to be weak and lame, and—well,

that was all. He had run every step of the way to let her know about it. Who could the stranger be?

"Your own dear uncle, my son," replied the good lady, warmly embracing the bearer of the joyful news. "There, run and order the carriage to be brought, and send some one for your father." And in the next hour Mr. Alloway and his wife were rolling rapidly along the road to Woodbourne.

To the desolate wanderer the meeting was unspeakably affecting, and he wept and sobbed on his sister's breast in a wild, passionate way, which showed how, in all the days of his dreary pilgrimage, his heart was ever yearning for that one touch of heavenly sympathy. Where he had been, what he had been doing, and how he had fared, none ever heard the whole story from his lips. He seldom referred to his personal adventures, and seemed to regard whatever had befallen him as of no consequence to the rest of the world. There was neither affectation of indifference nor ill-natured reticence in this enforced silence; only the weariness of melancholy dejection, and blank, unfathomed desolation of heart. Not a murmur of complaint nor symptom of impatience escaped him in word or gesture; still, the bent form, the tottering gait, the worn and weary look, and wan and wasted features, these told their eloquent tale of sorrow and suffering, and showed that at all times and in all places the ceaseless horror, "fell tyrant of the throbbing breast," held its victim bound with an iron chain. Every trace of angry passion and cynical emotion had departed; he was now all gentle-

ness and patience and holy resignation, watching and waiting for the joyful summons which would call the grief-burdened soul to its appointed rest. Such was his appearance to the observant eyes of his affectionate sister, when the first gush of suppressed feeling was over and he had relapsed into his habitual seriousness. Her womanly intuition divined the secret at a glance, and she felt a thrill of unspeakable rapture on finding that all was well with him at home. He had sought and found the Peace which the world cannot give nor take away.

Mrs. Alloway came to see him every day for weeks after his return, and found him always the same quiet, uncomplaining and abstracted being. To her anxious inquiries after his health, he invariably responded that he slept well, felt no decided pain, and usually ate with a relish what was set before him. On one of these visits she was much gratified to observe that he noticed the absence of the children, and wondered why they were never brought to see him; so far from being annoyed by them, nothing she could devise would afford him half so much agreeable diversion as their merry gambols and innocent prattle. After that they always accompanied her, and frequently came by themselves. At first they were considerably awed in his presence, but they were not long in finding out that he was the gentlest and most harmless of God's creatures, instead of the terrible ogre they had been led to imagine from the mystery in which his history was enveloped. In a little while his grave deportment ceased to impress them; but what they lacked in reverence, they more than made up in fondness.

And now the master was here, even the frowning grimaces and dreadful contortions of old George the butler, began to lose their former terrors. "Uncle didn't care," was the aggravating reply to every protestation of the enraged majordomo; "and everything on the land belonged to uncle, himself in the bargain; and he was nothing but an ugly, black, *Guinea* nigger, for all his consequential airs," which sally of juvenile wit never failed to rout the enemy, horse, foot and dragoons. Matters were even worse than before he came home, and the disgusted old servant, himself a paragon of all that was proper and decorous in behavior, out of patience with such weakness, wishes he had staid away altogether, since he was of no more account in his own house than to be made a stick-horse of by "dem audacious chill'un of Miss Jane's," the mention of whom was always coupled with the awful prognostication that "de debble was sartin to git de las' one on 'em." The monster! couldn't he see that the boisterous romps and antics of this wild troup of joyous sprites was worth all the physic in Dr. Harrington's saddle-bags to his master, and brought the only ray of real cheerfulness that ever illumined that sad face? And when they gathered around his chair, under the spreading oak on the lawn, to listen with breathless interest to the voice so unlike any they had heard before in its strangely plaintive and musical tones, telling such beautiful stories of the far-off lands he had visited, and the wonderful people and things he had seen, his devoted sister overflowed with thankfulness to find her tender ministering was not unavailing, since it

awakened in his breast transitory gleams of sunshine which she feared would never revisit that shady desert.

Shortly after his uncle's return, Richard was sent from home to try what efficacy there was in a noted fountain of learning in an adjoining county. To what extent he partook of its Pierian waters, and whether he derived any great benefit from the same, we have not been able to ascertain; but from the fact that he was never heard to brag of his attainments, it may be safely conjectured that he was contented with the intoxicating effect of shallow draughts, and left to older topers the sober delights of potations pottle deep. When his vacation came, Mr. Austin, who had manifested much interest in the boy, importuned his father to let him come and live at Woodbourne. Mr. Alloway readily consented, and as Dick was now grown almost to be a man, his society and assistance became at once a source of unmistakable pleasure and comfort to the lonely occupant of the great mansion, who, among other things, now directed his studies, and succeeded in inspiring him with a relish of the dainties which are bred in a book which he had never before experienced. With the help of such a kind and affectionate mentor, he made wonderful progress, and well-nigh atoned for his misspent hours. In return, he gave his attention to the affairs of the plantation, and as he did not interfere with Uncle George's department, everything went on now as pleasantly as could be desired by all parties. In and about the house was a perpetual atmosphere of calm serenity and tran-

quil repose, now and then disturbed by an incursion of the old butler's uproarious tormentors. Apparently, Mr. Richard Austin was greatly improved in health and spirits; yet he never went into society, and, except an occasional visit to his sister, led a life of perfect retirement and seclusion. His nephew relieved him of the irksome cares of his estate, and was the almoner of his generous bounty to the poor, so that he was wholly exonerated from worldly concerns. But he marked how swiftly the days were gliding by, and knew that his end was fast approaching.

One morning last May, Richard, who had been on some unusual errand, came in late to breakfast, and was surprised to find his uncle had not yet made his appearance. He was an early riser, and it was his custom, when dressed, to go to his library and spend an hour in study and devotion. Here they found him kneeling beside a chair, his head bowed over his clasped hands, which rested on the Holy Book he had opened for the last time. His prayer was answered; the poor captive was free, and the sweet smile which lingered on his face, recalling the image of his boyish grace and beauty, showed with what blissful ecstacy he had greeted the messenger of Heaven, and walked with him out of the dark shadow into the light of eternal happiness. His grave is the fourth one you see there, and the fifth is that of the old slave who followed him in a little while, and was laid at the feet of those he had so long and faithfully served. Such was the peaceful close of a life which had been embittered by one crushing grief, and it was con-

soling to know that during the last years of his earthly sojourn he had found an alleviation of his sorrows.

By his uncle's will, which was written before he went abroad, and lodged with Mr. Copland, the old lawyer whom we have mentioned, and which was never afterwards altered, his nephew succeeded to all his property, and as he left no debts or legacies to be paid, there was nothing to do but to take immediate possession without legal formalities of any description. And thus we find Mr. Richard Austin Alloway, at the free age of one-and-twenty, lord of the goodly manor of Woodbourne, with all its broad acres of field and forest—as fine a specimen of a free-handed, bold-spirited, bluff and burly country squire as could be found in the wide borders of the Old Dominion; a noted fox hunter, to be sure, and the proud owner of the winner of the sweepstakes at Mt. Airy racefield; yet by no means the embodiment of extravagance, idleness and dissipation, which he is represented to be in the caricaturing pictures of certain prejudiced and prudish story writers. He is very popular with his neighbors, young and old; entertains as becomes his station and fortune, and makes one in every party for pleasure and amusement; but he does not, on any account, neglect his plantation, which he manages without the aid of an overseer, and his affairs prosper accordingly. For the rest, it is evident that he does not intend to remain a bachelor longer than he can help, and of late the frequent apparition of a stalwart cavalier on a well-known sorrel horse, with a nosegay at his button-

hole, and a countenance expressive of the extremes of sheepish bashfulness and reckless indifference, always going the self-same way, furnishes an exhaustless theme for gossiping people, who will persist in taking so much trouble upon themselves about matters that don't concern them. How his wooing sped will in due time appear.

CHAPTER IV.

TO resume the thread of our story, the young gentlemen from whom we parted a moment ago to take this short flight over the "dark backward and abysm of time," are now seated by a cheerful fire in the dining-room; for, although the days are remarkably mild for the season, the nights are so cool that the warm blaze does not come amiss in that spacious apartment. Dick has been telling about his uncle, and when he had finished his voice was tremulous, and a tear was glistening in his mild, blue eye. His friend was far from being unmoved by the touching story, and sat for some time in deep meditation, gazing intently at the fire as if it were a Merlin's Mirror, in which he expected to find an explanation of all that is dark and enigmatical in human life.

"Dick," he at length said, musingly, "I hope you will not think me impertinent for pursuing a delicate topic—your family secrets—but there is a mystery here I would like to explore."

Dick.—"Certainly not, Harry; you are heartily welcome to all the information I have to impart; but, really, I am unable to see what there is so

very mysterious in my poor uncle's sorrowful history."

Harry.—"Nothing in the history, as far as it is written; but were you never curious to learn what was in the books the sybil burned? You are quite sure he left no record of his travels?"

Dick.—"None, as far as I have discovered in examining his papers; not the remotest hint of anything that happened to him while he was abroad is divulged in his writings, and all I know of the matter is what he told me at odd times, when in the vein of talking. The reason why the efforts to find his retreat proved futile, is now perfectly obvious—he had changed his name in order to prevent the possibility of his being traced. Doubtless, he imagined that this self-imposed penitence would be of no avail, unless it was fulfilled with scrupulous severity."

Harry.—"Was the late Mr. Austin a Roman Catholic?"

Dick.—"On the other hand, he was ardently attached to the Church of England; why do you ask?"

Harry.—"You spoke of his doing penance, which, as you know, is a word of fearful significance to devout Catholics—means frightful torturings and macerations of the flesh, lacerating integuments, horrible flagellations, peas and pebbles in one's shoes, sackcloth and ashes, pierced with cold, tormented with hunger, parched with thirst, and ever so many other unimaginable and unendurable agonies. Did he suffer all or any of these things?"

Dick.—"Of course I did not mean that sort of

penance. Indeed, I only used the word for want of a better. From the time that I came to know him well, he was religiously abstemious and self-denying, a pattern of temperance in all respects; but I am sure he did not entertain the fanatical notion, that the troubles of the mind could be eased or dispelled by racking the body with every manner of pain. Whenever the children came to see him, he would talk to them for hours at a time, in a pleasant and instructive way, of his ramblings and observations in Europe, and his sketches of characters and scenes were often exquisitely racy and humorous; especially glowing and beautiful was the description he gave them, with almost childish rapture, of what he called his 'Happy Valley,' in Switzerland, where he lived a whole year in a family of the better class of peasantry, for whom he formed the strongest attachment. Our conversation was usually confined to literary, moral and religious topics, followed by critical remarks from him on his favorite authors. He was thoroughly versed in French and Italian, and had what seemed to me to be an inordinate passion for Tasso, from whose 'Jerusalem Delivered' I trust to be evermore excused. That and 'Milton's Paradise Lost' were the toughest jobs I ever undertook; but to please Uncle Richard, I went resolutely through both of them without skipping a line."

Harry.—"Which is more than I can say. Is that all, Dick?"

Dick.—"Yes; at least I can think of nothing more at present."

Harry.—"One other question—but no, I will not

trouble you with that." Then suddenly putting on a quizzical mask of profound gravity, he continued, quoting from the quaint old Knight of Norwich: "'What songs the syrens sung, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions, are not beyond all conjecture.' My bay against your sorrel, Dickon, that I unmask your domino the very first trial. Your uncle's name—his assumed one, that is to say—was Metcalf."

Alloway regarded his companion with undisguised amazement.

"Why, Harry," he exclaimed, "you are—"

"Doctor Faustus or the devil!" cried his lively companion. "Don't be alarmed, old fellow; there is not a grain of black magic in it. Strange, though," he muttered, as if talking to himself, "that this interesting *solitaire* should never have occurred to us to be the man we were looking for."

Dick.—"The man you were looking for? What in the name of common sense do you mean by this provoking mummery?"

Harry (still preserving his serio-comic vein).—"*Davus sum non Œdipus;* you can read the riddle for yourself. Hearken unto the story. Some four or five months ago, while the convention was sitting, there came to Richmond a stranger, whose unusual appearance and mysterious behavior created no little stir in political circles. He brought letters from Mr. Charles Carroll, of Maryland, to Mr. Peyton Randolph and other distinguished gentlemen, to whom he made known his business, and then disappeared as quietly as he came. What was

the nature of his communication has not yet exactly transpired, but report says it had an important bearing on the questions at issue with Great Britain. The general notion seemed to be that he was a secret ambassador of the French Court. Shortly after his visit, the exigency of public affairs called my father to the temporary capital, where, meeting with Mr. Randolph, he was casually asked by that gentleman whether he was acquainted with a man in Virginia named Richard Metcalf, and answering to a particular description. His late visitor, said he, was greatly concerned to discover the whereabouts of the person he had described, and he had engaged to look him up if he could be found in the colony. My father had never heard of such an individual, but promised to aid Mr. Randolph in searching for him. All inquiries up to the time of Mr. Randolph's sudden death were fruitless, and after that lamentable event my father gave himself no further concern about the matter, until he received a letter from Mr. Carroll, some days ago, repeating the inquiry. The stranger, I learned, was a Catholic priest, the Abbé Julian Soulé. Did you ever hear of the name?"

Alloway shook his head; he was sorely puzzled. "It is too hard a nut for me to crack, Harry; a Catholic priest? What could he possibly want with Uncle Richard?"

"Yes, a veritable Catholic priest," repeated his friend, resuming his rallying tone; "you could not well look more preposterously horrified if I had said it was Old Nick himself, in hot pursuit of

some poor forsworn wretch who had managed to give him the slip, having repented too late of an evil bargain with the arch-enemy. Nonsense, Dick; you know well enough your good uncle was not a sorcerer, nor, what some folks think a great deal worse, a papist. I thought you were superior to such vulgar prejudices."

Dick.—"You are quite in the right for so thinking; I am not the least bit prejudiced on that score. Had you said he was a Jew or a Turk, it would have made no difference, as far as uncle was concerned; his religious faith was as rooted as that oak tree out there. A Catholic priest," he slowly repeated; "yes, I remember, in that thrilling story he narrated, a priest figures conspicuously, but his name was Father Manso, an Italian; the other name, I am positively certain, I never heard before."

Carleton.—"Well, I don't reckon it is of much consequence to you and me who his reverence is, or what he is after; so, letting him go for the present with a *pax vobiscum*, or what you please, tell me now, in few words, what you think is likely to be the be all and end all of this disturbance with England?"

Dick.—"That is what I would rather you should tell me, Harry; you have been playing statesman of late, and are deep in the public counsels. To my unsophisticated mind, there is every indication of a bloody and devastating civil war. It is not our fault, to be sure; we have had sufficient provocation, in all conscience, to justify an appeal to arms; but the alternative is none the less dreadful for that reason, nor will the righteousness of our

cause avert the miseries which fratricidal strife is sure to entail upon us. The die is cast; the sword only can decide the quarrel; resistance to the death should now be the watchword and reply in every patriot's mouth."

Harry (eagerly).—"Just what I expected to hear from your lips; they belied you, who said you were lukewarm in the cause."

Dick (with considerable warmth).—"What right has anybody to say that of me? Because I keep my own counsel, and don't choose to go swaggering and ranting about the country like a fantastical Armido or blustering Bobadil, ravished with the music of my own valorous tongue? It is nevertheless true, I am no Hotspur."

Harry.—"All the better for that; it is a name of unlucky omen—a splendid meteor, vanishing in darkness and dismay; a spasm of heedless insurrection expiring in a field of Shrewsbury. Cool heads and stout hearts are what we need. You are right; we cannot shut out the truth by holding up our hands in hopeless deprecation. It is now either independence or abject slavery. There is no longer room for temporizing expedients and patch-work compromises. There is but one course left for us, the *ultima ratio;* and that signifies everlasting liberty, or endless subjugation to the American people. So say the oldest and most cautious heads in the colony. The fact is, my dear friend,' he proceeded to say, warming with the exciting theme, "our English cousins have never had the slightest idea of granting our very reasonable demand. They steadily look upon us as

a set of political Pariahs and Ishmaelites—aliens from the Israel of British freedom, having no part or lot in the glorious heritage of Magna Charta. They have the monopoly of the commodity of price, and they mean to keep it if they can. Picture these lords of humankind, as they modestly call themselves, with their proud ports and defiant eyes passing in grand review before the nations, every dirty tatterdemalion among them swaggering about his birthright of liberty, and we, miserable outcasts from the pale of the constitution, not permitted to feed upon the husks that are left by the swinish multitude. Oh, it makes my blood boil to think of their audacious effrontery. How I wish I had never been born a British subject; a fig for the name!"

This sudden outburst of indignation was too much for Alloway's gravity. Seeing Carleton pause for breath, he caught up the satirical strain: "Let us have another manifesto of non-intercourse, Harry, and make its provisions as broad and general as the casing air. Henceforth homespun is the only wear, 'Sainte Croix' and 'Old Madeira' the only tipple; and John Bull shall not have our tobacco at a guinea a sneeze. That's the sum tottle o' the whole business—a mere matter of barter and exchange with these voracious sharks—a rump of pickled blue beef from the royal shambles for a cwt. of Virginia smoked venison; a cask of rotten Scotch herrings—"

Harry.—"Psha! those are mere trifles compared with the one great grievance—"

Dick (refusing to yield the floor).—"And then

we must keep on paying the old woman over there her annuity of pin-money for sending her Redcoats over here to stir up the redskins to mutiny and rage, and on no account forget to tickle the Pope of England's nose with a tythe's pig's tail for teaching us how to read the thirteenth chapter of Romans backwards. Others may do what they like, but, as for me, I hereby forever abjure, renounce, repudiate, scorn and despise the whole race of John Bull—not excepting Shakespeare and Spenser, and Milton and Pope, and Bacon, and Locke and Newton, and Boyle and—'O, Jemmy Thompson, Jemmy Thompson, O!'—let me not forget to anathematize the panegyrist who lauded his mighty countrymen after that disgustingly fulsome fashion—

> For every virtue, every worth renowned;
> Sincere, plain-hearted, hospitable, kind;
> Yet, like the mustering thunder, when provoked,
> The dread of tyrants, and the sole resource
> Of those who under grim oppression groan.

You have not forgotten my famous piece of declamation, Harry; how robustiously I used to mouth it, to the admiration of our dear old master, rest his soul! from 'Heavens! what a goodly prospect spreads around,' to the awful *eidolon* of—'Public zeal, ever musing on the common weal, and laboring glorious for some great design.' Jupiter! how fine I thought it was!—the very sublime of heroic verse, outstripping 'Achille's Wrath' and throwing '*Arma Virumque*' completely in the shade. Pah! nothing but downright flummery and arrant balderdash from beginning to end! Oh, the luxury of hating! I never knew what it was until now.

See how you have set me in a blaze, you firebrand of treason."

"Then," said Carleton, laughing, "I had better strike while the iron is hot. It is my purpose to go to work right away and raise a troop of light horse, and I want your assistance at the start."

Dick.—"You shall have it, heart and hand."

Harry.—"Seriously?"

Dick.—"As a Quaker at a love feast. I never jest on that subject."

Harry (enthusiastically).—"I am overjoyed to have you second my project so warmly. We will about it at once. Our noble chief shall not have cause longer to reproach us for our tardiness. As you say, it is not a subject for idle jest or vaporing. We should prepare in real earnest for the contest, and to fight we must have an army."

Dick.—"An army? Where is the army of General Washington?"

Harry.—"Little better than a mob, and fast melting away, from all accounts. We cannot fight British regulars with raw militia with any hope of success. You are a crack shot and a capital rider, my boy; but to cut a squirrel's head off with a rifle and jump a horse over a worm fence, desirable accomplishments as they may be, are not everything that is required to make a soldier of a man. Discipline, subordination, endurance, courage, fortitude—these are the necessary elements of an efficient army. It must be taught to move like a perfect machine at the will of its commander; and, fighting or retreating, marching or countermarching—"

Dick.—"Never mind the 'disciplines of the wars,' brave captain; Braddock's defeat has not shaken my faith in cold steel and steady valor. Close up, touch elbows, eyes front, march straight into the cannon's mouth, like an embattled stone wall, and—'Our army *swore* terribly in Flanders,' quoth my Uncle Toby—which last accomplishment is easily learned. It is a stubborn fact, Hal; there is no more dangerous animal alive than that same British Lion when he shakes his yellow mane and glowers and roars in very anger. It will require all the strength of our united hearts and hands, and other help beside, I am thinking, to keep our heads out of his ugly mouth. What do you perpend shall be done?"

Harry.—"Were all the people of my mind, they would declare George Washington military dictator, and resolve to a man to follow him blindfold. As it is, I shall endeavor, unfledged stripling as our reverend seniors call me, to do my full duty—carry out the scheme I have suggested, with your aid, and be ready to take the field before the campaign opens next spring. We shall have our hands full, without doubt; and, between us, Dick, matters are not as they should be at Boston. We need not proclaim our weakness on the housetops. If we did, we were irretrievably ruined—an easy prey for your ravening beast. Still the truth should not be concealed from those whose hearts are in the cause, and who have the will and the power to remedy the evil. Washington's confidential letters reveal a picture of poltroonery, sordid meanness and flagrant peculation which would be incredible if drawn by

a less scrupulous pen. He calls upon the flower of the native chivalry, the real yoemanry of the land, to come to the rescue; men who will freely take upon themselves the solemn vow of consecration to the holy work, and not quit the field until their country takes her equal station among the powers of the earth. It was well enough to advertise the world of the nature and extent of our grievances; to tell King George in good, set phrase that we will not longer bear the yoke of vassalage to the mother country. Now, silence in the ranks. No more brave words; no more paper fulminations; no more exuberant outpourings of the *dulce et decus* spirit in cataracts of rhetorical bombast. Are we earnest patriots, who look upon liberty as a jewel above price? Then let us take our stand without delay in the deadly breach, by the side of our chosen leader. But we will talk further of this another time. There is a ship lying below; can you tell me anything of her movements—when she sails and whither bound?"

Dick.—"That, sir, is the good bark *Katrine,* from Glasgow, Hamilton & Osborn, owners. She is here, I am told, to take on board the household goods and chattels, Lares and Penates, of Mr. Thomas Osborn, one of the firm, who has prudently determined to go back to Scotland and stay there until the storm blows over, if not for the rest of his days. Non-intercourse has already rendered the occupation of the Scotch merchants comparatively worthless, and some of them are seeking safer and more profitable investments."

Harry.—"What of your neighbor, Mr. Graeme? How is he affected by these troubles?"

Dick.—"Generally reserved and circumspect; avoids discussion, and keeps strict guard over his temper when the behavior of certain of his countrymen in Maryland is denounced. Yet he openly avows his abhorrence of Dunmore's brutal proclamation, and declares that it and other outrages, that spring-gun affair particularly, are past endurance. Like many others, I suspect he earnestly deprecates having to resort to extreme measures, without well seeing how they can be honorably avoided. His son is as outspoken a rebel as Patrick Henry, and had to be shipped over to Scotland to keep him out of mischief. Really, though, it was done more to relieve his mother's anxiety of mind than because his father disapproved his sentiments. By the way, Mr. Graeme can give you the information you desire respecting the vessel. He was once a partner of Mr. Osborn, and, I believe, still retains an interest in the concern.

Harry.—"Which is all the better for my purpose. Will you go with me to see him to-morrow?"

Dick.—"Yes, in the evening; I have an engagement will occupy the entire forenoon. A plague on't! I wish they had pitched on somebody else for the disagreeable job."

Harry.—"What is it, Dick?"

Dick.—"Oh, a most weighty affair. You see, my especial friend and pitcher, the collector, has been ever so long at loggerheads with an equally cross-grained neighbor about a patch of alder brake, which a fastidious muskrat wouldn't have as a gracious gift. There has been an interminable suit in ejectment between them, and at last, sick of

the law's delay, and sicker still of the fee bills they have had to foot, they, for a wonder, agreed to take it out of court, and refer it to two disinterested and judicious freeholders to decide. Lastly, the arbitrators have locked horns, and, worse to embroil the fray, have called me in as umpire. Do you know what I mean to do?"

Harry.—"Halve the loaf between the litigants?"

Dick.—"No."

Harry.—"Give them an equal share apiece of hard crust, and decree the rest in costs? that's English for equity."

Dick.—"Not a bit of it."

Harry.—"What then, O, learned judge?"

Dick.—"Why, I intend to award the whole of it to the frogs for a free commonwealth—a new Atlantis, where they may croak and croak from daylight to dawn again, with none to molest or make them afraid."

Carleton laughed heartily. "Capital, famous," he exclaimed; "the two-edged sword of justice cutting both ways at once—one edge lopping off an everlasting *casus belli* between two tough old sticklers for their rights; the other carving out a perpetual paradise for the subjects of King Log. If you wield a sabre with the same address, what a trooper you will make. Then you can't go till evening; well, that will be time enough for my business with Mr. Graeme. I'm sorry his son is gone away; the country can ill afford to spare such as he. Is young Graeme their only child?

Dick—"The only son living; they had another and—a daughter," there was just the least

tremor of embarrassment in his voice, and the faintest shade of heightened color suffused his sunburnt cheek, but they did not escape the quick, sparkling eyes of his sprightly guest.

"And one fair daughter," he exclaimed; "I see it all now; you sly old fox, earthed at last. But how is this, Dick; what have you done with your other charmer of whom report tells—the lovely rose of Clifton? she that is said to be 'the shop of all the qualities that man loves woman for.' Has the fair Roseline found a Juliet in the daisy of Bonhill? Why, I took you for the very north star of constancy, and, lo! you are as fickle as the moon. Come, unbosom; I am dying to hear—"

"Get out with your nonsense, Harry," replied the persecuted swain; "it is time to go to bed." And without further ceremony he snatched up a candle and conducted Carleton to his apartment for the night.

CHAPTER V.

"YOU must amuse yourself here as best you can till dinner-time, Harry," said his host next morning, as he was mounting his horse. "James will give you the key of the library, and nothing more is wanting to install you in full authority during my absence."

Carleton was not at all averse from being left to himself for some hours in the pensive solitude of the quiet mansion. He had not been able to close his eyes immediately on retiring, fatigued as he was, for thinking of its late occupant, and weaving all manner of imaginary adventures out of the little hank of party-colored material, which Dick's strange narrative had furnished; and when he did fall asleep, the memory of that disjointed story he had been listening to and trying to put together in congruous and intelligible form, still lingered and haunted him in a tantalizing dream, in which he seemed to be chasing a phantom shape through scenes he had read of, until they were as familiar to his imagination as any spot known to his school-boy rambles. Now he saw it toiling painfully up some rugged Alpine steep, and ever and anon resting on its staff and gazing wistfully

at the glittering peak, which mocked its daring aim; then it appeared to be gliding like a shadow among mouldering ruins and crumbling fanes, or vanishing in the cloistered gloom of solemn minster or grim sepulchral vault; then, again, it is seen standing lonely and weird on the deck of the storm-driven vessel, and straining its wild, yearning eyes over the dark and barren waste of waters, and, at last, it returns to find its only rest under the canopy of the loving oak, whose mighty arms stretch forth and clasp the wanderer in an eternal embrace.

On awaking from his fevered trance—sleep it could hardly be called—he found it impossible to shake off the enchantment of those nightly visions, and at breakfast his host did not fail to note the air of musing and absent-minded soberness, which was so much at variance with his wonted rollicksome and debonair gaiety. Alloway did not venture to ask for an explanation of his guest's unusual pensiveness, for fear of bringing on another fit of teasing, and, with the ordinary polite commonplaces, left him to chew the cud of whatever fancy had taken possession of his thoughts.

After a short stroll over the lawn and through the garden, Carleton returned to the house, and taking the key from the servant, proceeded to the library. He could not repress a slight feeling of awe as he turned the key in the lock, but it disappeared as soon as he opened the door.

The sun, streaming in at the windows, bathed the apartment in a quivering flood of mellow radiance, and far from presenting the gloomy array he

had pictured, every object wore the brightest and most cheerful aspect. The heavy walls and ceiling paneled in grained oak, and glistening with a new coat of varnish; the solid furniture of shining mahogany and black walnut without speck or stain; the well-filled book-cases, around which no sign of cobwebs and venerable dust was clinging—these certainly were not the common appurtenances of an anchorite's devotional retreat. In one corner of the room stood a large, old-fashioned cabinet, or "secretary," profusely embellished with brass ornaments in the highest state of polish, and opposite to this was a glass case of imposing dimensions, which was stored with an *omnium gatherum* of rare curiosities—mineral substances in endless variety, relics of art, *objets-de-vertu*, and the like—a sight such as would make a virtuoso's heart leap for joy, and prove by no means uninteresting to the man of real science. The ample fireplace was adorned with huge brass andirons, on which the wood was piled ready to be kindled; a substantial fender of the same material protected the uncarpeted and wax-polished floor, and they, the andirons and fender, as well as the shovel, poker and tongs, were burnished to a degree of immaculate brilliancy that was marvellous to behold. In the middle of the room was a large, round table, on which were writing materials, several books, and bundles of papers neatly tied up and sealed, and by its side stood an ancient heirloom in the shape of a capacious easy-chair, lined with morocco and padded with hair, and having a contrivance for writing or resting a book attached to one of its arms. The mantlepiece was decorated

with a pair of massive silver-plated candelabra, two handsome-figured porcelain vases, and various specimens of Wedgewood's ornamental wares, and in a niche above it was a terra-cotta bust, which passed current, on what authority is not stated, for a speaking likeness of the renowned founder of Jamestown colony; one or two bronze statuettes, on brackets, of famous mythological characters, a few select pictures of English hunting and pastoral scenes, a dozen chairs of sundry patterns, a commodious sofa, and an inviting settee, or kind of lounge; these, with the books on the shelves, the map on the wall, the dove-colored window curtains and one large portrait, complete our tame description of this fairer dwelling of heavenly pensive contemplation than the awful monastic cell to which she has been ruthlessly consigned by Pope and Parnell's melancholy muse. The deeply-recessed windows looked out on a wildering maze of shrubs and flowers, whose glories had fled the approach of winter, and at no great distance in the background towered, in regal pomp of purple and gold, the majestic forest, which was Woodbourne's envied ornament and pride. Through the latter a wide and deep ravine, making a natural vista, afforded a tantalizing glimpse of the lovely prospect beyond, bounded by the dark-blue line of the Potomac, and the softer azure-hued "silent hills and more than silent skies" of Maryland. Within, every object was bright and alluring, and without it was so dreamy and still it seemed as if all the world, like the cat demurely dozing on the garden fence, had gone to sleep under the drowsy influence of the delicious November haze—

Whose vapory folds o'er the landscape strays
And half involves the woodland maze,
Like an early widow's veil,
Where dimpling tissues from the gaze,
The form half hides and half betrays,
Of beauty wan and pale.

Whatever of agony and torturing care the self-exiled wanderer may have suffered elsewhere, or what the pangs, if any, he endured in secret at home, assuredly they could not be laid to the charge of the tutelary genius of this delightsome abode. Such was Carleton's internal conviction as he took in the whole charming scene at a glance, before pausing to inspect the portrait which confronted him. It was that of a rosy-cheeked, fair-haired boy of sixteen summers, surprisingly beautiful and radiant with the "purple light of love and bloom of young desire." Looking on that exquisite picture, how vividly came rushing into his memory the mournful numbers of that psalm of life he knew by heart, and there was an unsuspected pathos and depth of feeling in his voice as he repeated aloud the lines,

Yet see how all around them wait,
The ministers of human fate,
And black misfortune's baleful train!

Could that handsome cavalier, proud, self-reliant, panoplied in complete armor for the fray in the times which tried men's souls, have had a premonition of the evil days to come? Had the unseen hand of the wizard pushed aside the mystical curtain for a moment, and revealed to his gaze the maimed and broken wreck of a noble form, racked

upon a bed of suffering, on a lonely island, and dying far from wife, and children, and friends, and sacred home? He turned away with a sigh, and walked to the book-case. Having diverted himself there for awhile with turning over the leaves of one or two books, and discovered that he was in no humor for reading, he at last fell to contemplating the old secretary in the corner, and surmising what it might have hid away in its numberless receptacles. There was no telling how old it was; it had the unmistakable impress of hoar antiquity; had witnessed, no doubt, the passing away of several generations, and consequently possessed the irresistible attractions which surround the proverbial tomb of secrets in every old house. It should be remarked, however, that we Virginia people have a queer delusion on the subject of antiquarianism, and are in the habit of speaking invariably of the Old Dominion, of colonial memory, in that venerating way which seems to imply an antediluvian existence, and of our blessed great grandams as if they flourished at a period when "Pharaoh's mother's mother's mummy" was a crispy-headed marvel of toddling babyhood.

To resume, our young friend was in the best possible frame of mind to indulge a roving, listless curiosity, and he felt himself drawn towards the mysterious object in the corner by an invisible power. He could not forbear smiling at the eagerness with which he found himself approaching it. How ridiculous, he thought, the idea of expecting to discover anything here which would throw a ray of light on the subject of his idle cogitations. Of

course, every hole and cranny had been probed and peered into a hundred times over. Still he could not divest himself of a certain vague, undefined sensation that he was treading on the verge of a wonderful revelation—due in a great measure to the reflection he was then making, that Dick had only examined his uncle's papers in a careless, perfunctory manner, without reference to any particular inquiry, and, therefore, had probably overlooked or forgotten many things which he might consider extremely significant in clearing up the mystery concerning the late Mr. Austin and the Catholic priest. The first drawer he opened contained naught but a pile of uninviting rubbish, newspapers, pamphlets, loose sheets of paper torn from old ledgers, mingled in a confused mass, which showed the little value in which they were held, and the many times they had been rummaged over; so with the second and the third, which, in addition to the trumpery we have mentioned, were filled with an endless assortment of disabled household utensils. The fourth drawer was more attractive in appearance, though it, too, promised very little towards rewarding the painful researches of a curiosity hunter, presenting, as it did, one sea of letters upon letters, some of them tied up in packages, whilst others lying open were fastened together in piles by a thread, as if arranged for easy reference. They bore the address of Mr. John Austin, and embraced the greater portion of his voluminous correspondence with distinguished men of his day, on topics of public interest—matter, perchance, valuable to the future historian of the colony, but wholly uncon-

cerned with the fortunes of the recluse. There was a MS. among them, which proved to be an unfinished memoir and biographical sketch of his father, on which Mr. Richard Austin was employed at the time of his death. Having given this a hurried perusal, and entertained himself for some time with skimming over old letters, in which politics, the price of tobacco and negroes, religious squabbles, Indian depredations, Braddock's expedition, and other matters relating to the welfare of the colony before he was born, were mixed in an inextricable mêlange, Carleton was about to close the drawer, when a familiar hand-writing on the back of one of the bundles of letters he had not disturbed arrested his attention. It was from his father, who had once been Mr. John Austin's colleague in the House of Burgesses. He untied the package, and examined the contents. The letters were all from the same source, and of the same general purport—consulting and comparing opinions on legislative matters. All but one, which appeared to be strangely out of place in that company, intruded there evidently through inadvertence. These documents had been carefully inspected by the author of the MS., as was shown by the copious extracts of them he had made. The interloping epistle was addressed to Richard Austin, Esquire, Gent.; N———— Store, W—— County, Virginia. As Carleton stood holding the letter in his hand, and looking wonderingly at the strange superscription, he again felt the sensation of mysterious awe creeping over him.

"Psha!" said he, striving to throw off the spell with a contemptuous shrug; "what childish folly is

this! One would think I was in the very act of unrolling the dread scroll of fate, and reading what it had in store for me, when, in fact, I am only halloing my idle fancy on a wild-goose chase. There is nothing in Mr. Richard Austin's melancholy history can affect my career in life. Yet, how do I know that? Who can foretell the influence which one man's lightest act or word may have on the fortunes of others? Is not each of us a link in the chain of inscrutable destiny? But a truce to moralizing; let's see what is here." He opened the letter, and read as follows:

LONDON, Feb. 12, o.s., 1775.

MY DEAR SIR:

Yours, under date of November 16th, 1774, came to hand only a fortnight ago, the vessel having been delayed on the voyage over by stress of weather. Agreeable to your wishes, I lost no time in calling upon Sir William Markham, M.P., at his lodgings in this city. Our interview was of the most pleasant and satisfactory character. Waiving preliminaries, I showed him your letter, remarking that it would best explain the nature of my business. He perused it with grave interest, and, as I thought, suppressed emotion. After which he said, "Please do me the kindness to say to Mr. Austin, that I duly received his communication, and that my failure to acknowledge it involves a tedious and painful explanation, which shall be made as soon as I can command sufficient leisure." He then told me of a visit he had from a Catholic priest, who was apparently interested about the same subject, and whom he had treated very cavalierly, to say the least, not having deigned even to ask his name. Was that person in Mr. Austin's confidence? If so, where could he be found? I replied that I had never heard you speak of such a person in con-

nection with him, and that I would advise you of the circumstance in my answer to your letter. With that our conference ended.

The master of the *Speedwell* has just called to inform me that his vessel will drop down on the next tide, and to know if I wish to send anything on board. As I have several little commissions to dispatch, I must bring this letter to a close. Please tell Mr. Copland that his matter received prompt attention; I sent remittance to him last week in exchange on Amsterdam, for fear of accidents. I yet hope and believe we will arrive at a good understanding with the colonies. Let me hear from you by the first opportunity. Communication with America is becoming more and more uncertain every day. Did you get the books shipped per packet *Rover?* I am pleased to hear that your health continues to improve. With best wishes, I remain,

Faithfully, your friend and obedient servant,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

"February 12th, 1775," repeated Carleton, looking back at the date of the letter; "received April 6th, and answered on the 15th of the same month. Mr. Austin died shortly after; and so ends the chapter. How provoking. It is plain that Dick has not seen this letter. The priest again. Can he be the same Julian Soulé? I have a mind to write to Mr. Carroll." The sound of hurried footsteps in the hall interrupted the train of his thoughts, and he barely had time to thrust the letter in his bosom before Alloway came bursting into the room.

"Halloo, old fellow," he exclaimed, in his hearty way, as his eye fell on the open drawer of the secretary; "what the deuce are you up to there? Could you find nothing better to console you for

my absence than is to be got by gnawing at the mouldy bare bones in that lumber chest? Come, I am sure you need something to wash your throat and help your digestion after such a musty repast. You see I am back sooner than I promised," he rattled on, while Carleton was re-arranging the contents of the drawer. "One of the referees was sick, and the case had to be laid over. I would have been here an hour ago, if I had not chanced to fall in with Bob Temple on the road. He is always brimful of news, and is a kind of good-natured, gossiping burr that one finds hard to shake off. To tell the truth, I relish a little of Bob once in a while, taken fresh, but he gets to be consumedly boring on too long and too frequent acquaintance. Still, there is no great harm in the prattling jaybird of a creature. He had been to Clifton, he said, to pay his respects to the foreign gentleman from France, who is Colonel Littleton's guest. 'Foreign gentleman,' said I; 'do you mean the fellow who bolted into our chase yesterday, and out again, like a clap of thunder?' 'The very same,' replied Bob. 'You see, one of the colonel's *hands* was down at my house betimes this morning for a load of oysters, and he told me as how his master and young mistress were just, the day before yesterday, come home from Maryland, and brought with them a mighty nice gentleman, they called Mr. Conrad—a beau Miss Mary had caught somewhere over the river. So I thought it was the civil thing to do for me to ride up and call on the distinguished stranger, for between us, not to go any farther, there is no manner of doubt about it, he is a count

or marquis, or something of the sort, as sure as a gun's iron.' 'Marquis, fiddlesticks!' said I; 'more likely a runagate of a dancing master, or absconding *valêt-de-chambre*. Did you see him?' 'No,' said he, 'he was gone to ride with Miss Littleton. I sat some time waiting for them to return, when who should walk in but my especial aversion, old Jake Thompson'—he gave Bob his title of Daily Postman—'he was come for his usual dish of politics with the colonel, and they were soon at it tooth and nail, talking, and swearing, and gesticulating like mad. That sort of fuming and raving did not suit me, so I left my compliments for the marquis, and promised to call again.' Marquis, quotha! and this philandering Monsieur Magnifico is Miss Littleton's latest conquest. A second Portia is my fair cousin, and this another Colchos strand for many Jasons," and Dick closed the library door with a bang, and led the way to the dining-room in the loftiest imaginable state of scornful incredulity. Carleton was too busily occupied with his own thoughts to pay attention to this disdainful ebullition. When they had finished their toddy, and were seated together on the porch, he adroitly turned the conversation into the channel in which he wished it to flow.

CHAPTER VI.

IT had not escaped his guest's keen observation that Mr. Richard Alloway was more deeply agitated than he cared to acknowledge by that incident concerning the Catholic priest. Evidently, it had not before occurred to him that there was aught of especial interest in his uncle's lonely career to anybody but his own family and small circle of friends. His emotion, on hearing Carleton's story, was that of undisguised wonder at a most unexpected revelation. The fact that a stranger, whose name he did not remember to have ever heard from Mr. Austin's lips, was so much interested to find him out, was well calculated to excite in a less sensitive mind than Dick's something more serious than a transitory feeling of curiosity. Duly respecting the tender and affectionate reverence with which his friend invested the memory of his uncle, Carleton observed the utmost delicacy in approaching the subject.

"What a charming library you have, Dick," said he; "nothing of the awful or mysterious to be seen there."

"It is the brightest spot about the house," replied Dick; "everything is just as uncle left it, except

the portrait, which took the place of one of my grandfather I pointed out to you in the hall. He had the room repaired and newly painted last spring shortly before his death. He was very partial to it, and spent a third of his time there in the old arm-chair beside the table."

Harry.—"How did he occupy himself?"

Dick.—"Usually in reading and meditation; latterly he wrote a good deal, being interested in preparing memoirs of his father and other eminent men of that day. You may have seen the MS. among those old papers?"

Harry.—"I read portions of it; he has paid my father the compliment of quoting extensively from his letters to Mr. John Austin. He was alone, I imagine, the greater part of the time."

Dick.—"Yes; frequently during the day and always at night until his regular hour for retiring, he had the room entirely to himself. It was his custom of a morning and evening, when the weather was good, to walk awhile in the garden and look after the flowers, of which he was very fond, and now and then he would have his chair brought out in the shade of the oak tree on the lawn; still, with Prospero, he might truthfully say, his library was his dukedom."

Harry.—"And you are positively certain he left nothing in the way of writings except the unfinished memoirs?"

Dick.—"That is certainly my firm belief."

Harry.—"You have, then, made a thorough search among his papers?"

Dick.—"His papers? Why he left nothing but

what you saw. Most of that rubbish in the old secretary was a legacy from my grandfather; I have never had the least inclination, to say nothing of the leisure, to overhaul it. As for the unfinished memoirs, *pendunt opera interrupta*, and so they are likely to remain for this generation, if they look to me for completion. But why are you so inquisitive, Harry? did you find a mare's nest in that ancient heirloom? By Jove! old fellow—" It should be remarked in this place, *par parenthese*, that Mr. Richard Alloway had a habit of frequently appealing, in a familiar manner, to the great Olympian Thunderer, whether as a meaningless expletive merely, or a convenient rhetorical safety-valve, or as his peculiar way of making known his veneration of the ancient classics, we cannot undertake to say. "By Jove! old fellow, I verily believe you are a regular professor of black magic. That look, now, 'angels and ministers of grace defend us!' Do they teach necromancy in your famous Wittenberg in New Jersey?"

Carleton laughed, and putting off the mask of simulated awe he had waggishly assumed, "Don't be alarmed, Dick," said he; "I am not trying to work upon your superstitious fears. My questioning was only intended to make certain whether you had ever seen this letter."

Alloway took it from his hand, and seeing to whom it was addressed, became, on an instant, very grave and thoughtful. When he had perused it twice over, he fell into a profound reverie, and began whistling in a low undertone—a sign, as his friend well knew, that he was perplexed to an

extraordinary degree. Carleton, too, dropped into a brown study. To his susceptible imagination, the letter revealed a fascinating scene of wild and startling conjecture. It was like a voice from the grave of the buried past, whose weird, unearthly tone vibrated on his heart, and called up a throng of fantastic and shadowy images. The torturing illusions of his last night's dream faded into nothingness before the consciousness of some unknown life mystery which lay hidden, as he conceived, under the ivy green an arrow's flight from where he sat, pondering on the strange words he had read.

"You observed the allusion there to the priest, Dick," he at length said, musingly; "he is the veritable *deus ex machina* of our mystery. Of course it can be no other than the Abbé Julian Soulé."

"Like enough," replied Dick; "but it was not of him I was thinking. Markham, Markham—why, that was the name of the unfortunate hero of uncle's pathetic little romance; and, what is likewise remarkable, the other prominent character, a lady, was called Conrad; it is an Italian story of cruelty and revenge."

Harry.—"Do tell it to me, Dick."

Dick.—"No, no; I would not like to mar it by a hap-hazard recital; besides, it is too long to remember. I have it written down in my commonplace book just as uncle narrated it, and another time you may read it for yourself. Let me see; where was it that I saw mention of Sir William Markham? Oh, I remember now; in looking over a batch of old English newspapers on the top of one of those book-cases in the library. It occurs in an account

of the proceedings in Parliament; he is reported to have made a strong speech in defence of the people of Massachusetts. The passage was marked with a pencil, but I did not see anything specially noteworthy in it."

Harry.—"And nothing further has been heard from Mr. Buchanan?"

Dick.—"O, yes; I have had one letter from uncle's factor; I'll show it to you, it is such a perfect model of commercial neatness and brevity." He went in, and soon came back with an open letter, which he handed Carleton, who read it as follows:

CHEAPSIDE, LONDON, 12th Aug., 1775.

ESTEEMED SIR:

Inclosed please find account of my late correspondent, Mr. Richard Austin (whose sole devisee and legatee I am advised you are), stated to date of his demise, showing balance to his credit of £967, 8s. 6½d., which is subject to your instructions.

Begging you to accept the assurance of my sincere condolence in your recent sad bereavement, I subscribe myself,

Most respectfully, your obedient humble servant,

JAMES BUCHANAN, Merchant.

For MR. RICH'D A. ALLOWAY.

"Neat as a copper plate, and, doubtless, very correct; but not a syllable about the baronet and the priest," said Carleton.

"And pray," said Dick, "why should Mr. Buchanan suppose that I felt any interest in these distinguished persons?"

Harry.—"Nothing was more reasonable than for

him to infer that Mr. Richard Austin's favorite nephew shared his intimate confidence, and ought, therefore, to be informed of whatever pertained to his private and peculiar transactions."

Dick.—"Then, I am glad he did not take your very reasonable view of the case. It is my opinion that there is nothing to be gained by boggling after this plaguey will-o'-wisp of a mystery, as you call it, which, if found out, would be of as little concern to you and me as what is this moment coming to pass at the Antipodes," with which conclusive remark, Alloway folded up the merchant's letters and put them in his pocket.

Carleton was not a little puzzled by his friend's nonchalance. He could not exactly divine what was the nature of the sensations which had been awakened in the young planter's mind by the disclosures he had made. Was it real or feigned, his repugnance to pursuing the investigation? Yet, his behavior was in keeping with his general character. His nature was too earnest and matter-of-fact; his temper too hopeful and elastic to suffer him to brood over the past, or vex his soul with chasing the fleeting phantom of a heated imagination. He was never at a loss for active, wholesome employment for mind and body, and his "bosom's lord sat lightly on its throne," now that he was assured by the sacredest of human vows of the joy which is immeasurably above and beyond all other earthly benisons, the immediate jewel of the soul, requited love.

"It is a tough case," such was Carleton's internal reflection; "but I am not yet disposed to give it up. I was always expert in unravelling tangled skeins, and see if I don't yet succeed in running

this thread off on a reel. The first thing to do is to ascertain what the Abbé wants with Mr. Richard Metcalf, otherwise, Austin. That my father can do when he replies to Mr. Carroll's letter. But it occurs to me that Monsieur Conrad may be able to give us some information on the subject; at least, he can tell us who the Abbé is. He came hither from Maryland in Miss Littleton's train, and her sister is a near neighbor to the Carrolls', where the priest is sojourning. Being fellow-countrymen and strangers in a strange land, they must be known to each other. Dick," said he, suddenly arousing his friend from the pleasant doze into which he had fallen, "suppose we call upon the Frenchman in the morning?"

"You must excuse me, Harry," said Dick hastily; "to-morrow I shall be busy at home; besides, I want you to ride with me over the farm. I flatter myself that I have made sundry improvements of late, the hint of which I got from my neighbor, Mr. Graeme. Speaking of him, I am reminded that I have a note of invitation for you to a party at Bonhill; here it is."

"A party?" exclaimed Carleton; "that is lucky. I shall have a chance to see all my friends in a lump. 'Mr. and Mrs. John Graeme will be pleased to see Mr. Carleton at Bonhill on Friday night, instant, on the occasion of their daughter's birth-day party.' What a beautiful hand—good sign, says my Lord Chesterfield, of a graceful person and an amiable disposition. Come, old boy, wake up, and tell me all about the Graemes."

But we will save Mr. Alloway the trouble of complying with that modest request.

CHAPTER VII.

HAPPILY blended in mutual love and esteem had been the lives of John and Ellen Graeme from the day they plighted troth to each other under the rowan-tree, on the banks of Leven Water, to the date of the present memoirs. Goldenly bright had the hours flown over their heads; their house was the garner of the choicest gifts of fortune, and the neighbors, one and all, came to regard them as an example of matrimonial felicity, which the most inveterate celibate must envy and applaud.

But now again the heavens are hung with black, and the future looks dark and ominous of approaching ills. True, the entire country is involved in a common trouble, the same perils menace all alike; but none of her neighbors had with her experienced the actual calamities of civil war, and the prospect of another sanguinary struggle between kinsmen and former friends calls up, with all the dread accompaniments of horror and alarm, the woeful tragedy in which she had borne more than her equal portion of sorrow and suffering. To others it is as yet the vague apprehension of unknown and indefinable ills; to her it is the present reali-

zation of the acme of human misery, the sum of all the wretchedness that the worst passions of the vilest men can invoke upon their sinful race; ever the self-same demon of wrath and desolation, red with the stains of all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, whether welling slow, drop by drop, from the breast of the first victim of murderous rage, or poured forth in crimson torrents—

> When merciless ambition or mad zeal
> Has led two hosts of dupes to battlefield,
> That, blind, they there may dig each others graves,
> And call the sad work, Glory!

Husband and wife had kept, with religious fidelity, the vow they had made to each other long years ago, and never a word had passed the lips of either on the one forbidden topic. But Mr. Graeme cannot help perceiving the change which has come over his wife's spirits, and he intuitively divines the secret cause of her trouble. He sees that a great dread is constantly hanging over her, threatening to fall with crushing weight. Again busy memory is at work, reviving the agonies which are past, and filling her soul with wretched forebodings of worst to come; again—

> The field of the slain rushes red on her sight,
> And the clans of Culloden are scattered in flight!

Every day she grew more and more nervous and disquieted, and her husband's anxiety increased in proportion. Yet she firmly held by their mutual pledge, and he was waiting for her to release him. So it went on, until one night Mr. Graeme was greatly startled to hear her sobbing violently in

her sleep, and repeating, in piteous accents, the names of her father, brother and son. Next morning the seal of the covenant was broken. She unbosomed her soul to her husband, and earnestly besought him to send George away to Scotland until they saw how these unhappy troubles were likely to end. The request was an agreeable surprise to the worthy gentleman. He had a project in reference to his son's future career in life, which he had forborne to mention since the lad's return from Williamsburg some months agone, for fear it would not meet his mother's approval in the then agitated state of her mind, as it required for its accomplishment a separation from George of several years.

Although Mr. John Graeme was never heard to set up a pretence of being a very profound scholar, he was by no means so unlearned as to be an object of pity on a rainy day. In all the branches of practical and useful information, he was far in advance of the most polished and polite of his neighbors. It had been his particular pride to keep abreast with the scientific improvements of the age; he was familiarly acquainted with the latest inventions of mechanical skill, and had been instrumental in introducing some of them to the community in which he resided. When he abandoned mercantile pursuits, he transferred to his new avocation of farming his entire stock of method, energy and sagacity, and his example had imparted a fresh impulse to agricultural development, which was especially evidenced in the inroads which the cultivation of the cereals was beginning to make on

the growth of the great commercial staple of the colony. He was a noble instance of genuine, sturdy independence. He bought nothing abroad which could be as well made at home. No appliances were wanting in his administration to make the business of farming at once easy, economical and remunerative. He had constructed, on his plantation, a smithy and a large shop, where carpenter, wheelright and cooper's work was done, and where many of the implements and utensils of husbandry were made out and out from the most approved models. Then there was the "ship-yard," at which all manner of small boats and larger river craft were built and repaired; but the splendid "double mills," in the ownership of which his neighbor, Colonel Littleton, claimed a half interest, were the pride and delight of the whole countryside, turning out flour which rivalled in quality the famous *Mount Vernon* brand, with its unimpeachable inscription, "G. Washington!" The paraphernalia of his peculiar sanctum, the room in which he entertained his particular cronies, displayed the ruling characteristics of his mind; every article of furniture having been manufactured on the spot, from the plentiful supply of material of maple, oak, cherry, walnut and pine, stored up in the commodious warehouse of the neighboring forest. In short, albeit Mr. John Graeme was theoretically an avowed advocate of free trade and sailors' rights in the broadest sense, he was in practice as perfect an illustration of home-brewed, home-loving, and home-protecting industry and frugality as one rarely meets with now-a-days.

George's fortune was already made, as far as worldly goods were concerned; he should, so his father thought, learn to devote his leisure and means to the prosecution of such useful aims and purposes as here found abundant scope for active exemplification. As a preparation for this field of usefulness, it was designed that the young gentleman should perfect his theoretical studies in physical science at the University of Glasgow, after which he was to visit and inspect its more recent discoveries, as exhibited in the various factories and workshops of Europe.

But whilst Mr. Graeme was no doubt mainly solicitous to see his son embarked on his magnificent voyage of scientific exploration, there was another motive, we have good reason to suspect, for his acceding so promptly to his wife's request. Master George was a remarkably susceptible youth, as the phrase is, and, more is the pity, had fallen madly in love with a lady who did not see fit to return his inordinate attachment. The consequence was, that he had grown, of late, very miserable and melancholy, and his father reasonably concluded that the best remedy for the disease of unrequited love was to be found in "change o' fowk and change o' scene." Secretly, the old gentleman was himself considerably cut up by his son's lamentable misadventure in the mart of matrimonial speculation. He was an extravagant admirer of Miss Mary Littleton, and had George's suit prospered, he would have hailed the event with beaming satisfaction. As it was, he did not altogether despair of its being a match one of these days. George was

hardly better than a grown-up boy; his education for the stern pursuits of life was just begun, and nobody could foresee the difference which a few years might make in those qualities which attract a woman's wayward fancy. While the fair maid of Clifton remained mistress of her inclinations, there was ground for the hope that she might be persuaded to look at the proposition in a more favorable light. So argued *paterfamilias* on the general theory of probabilities. But we shall presently see that the capricious divinity, who regulates these little matters, had decreed that his sanguine calculations should be cruelly disappointed.

For the reasons we have detailed, Mr. Graeme consented with alacrity to his wife's entreaties, and George sailed in the next outward-bound vessel for Glasgow. There let us leave him for the present, to quench the flame of his ill-starred passion, and at the same time to temper the ardor of his patriotic soul by contact with the discreet and calculating burghers of that aspiring and eminently loyal metropolis. When he was gone, and had written to tell them of his safe arrival in Scotland, and of the pleasant reception he had met with among his father's friends and relatives there, his mother appeared to be greatly relieved, regained much of her old cheerfulness, and went about her household duties with the diligence and grace which were the ruling traits of her disposition. Thus desperately she clung to the faint hope of a happy issue out of this last great affliction, and watched with wistful eyes and palpitating heart every sign and portent of the political heavens. But the clouds

continued to gather thick and fast, and every day the palpable darkness was increasing; now the air was filled with the sulphury vapor of war; the Revolution was begun in earnest, and Mrs. Graeme's faith in the emblematical evening sky was shaken as a reed. The hour was fast approaching; she felt it was close at hand when the irrevocable decision must be made, and while she prayed the more fervently that she might yet be spared the dreadful ordeal, her heart indignantly spurned the base suggestion that her darling son would prove a recreant to the cause of his native land. Now that she saw the fearful alternative could not be much longer avoided, she sought to divert her mind from the contemplation of the painful scene by constant employment. In vain her husband protested that she was over-exerting herself; she only smiled at his remonstrances, and said he was mistaken; the work was good for her. Thus she continued to pay the most assiduous attention to every demand of duty until an untoward accident compelled her desist.

There had been a sort of epidemic prevailing in the neighborhood during the month of August of this year—a virulent type of fever—of which the medical faculty were at loss for an explanation. The distemper was said to be contagious, and every precaution was taken to prevent its spreading. Bonhill did not escape its ravages; half of the servants were taken down with it, and the other half were stupefied with terror, waiting for their time to come. Amid this scene of suffering and dismay there moved a ministering spirit with the balm of solacing joy and healing on its wings. It was the lovely mis-

tress of the manor, fulfilling her mission with that serene, unshrinking heroism, which shames the highest courage of man. The plague abated, and, thanks to her unwearied exertions, there was not a single death from its effects on the plantation.

By a miracle of mercy the good matron escaped its fangs, but the fatigue and exposure she had undergone in nursing the sick so impaired her health and weakened her constitution, that her physician peremptorily commanded her to refrain from her accustomed labors. Thus, reluctantly constrained, she sought the needful refreshment of rest, and surrendered the sceptre for a time into her daughter's hand. And, her father's word for it, that young lady wielded it in queenly style.

Where is the woman that does not exult to exercise authority,—in her rightful sphere, of course? It was amusing to see the old gentleman, who was used to nothing short of unquestioned obedience, watching the little woman as she bustled about the house, issuing her commands, and showing her love of sway in a thousand nameless ways. Especially did he note the delight it gave her to move all the portable property in that inner shrine of his at least once a day without the slightest provocation, merely to intimate that her will was the supreme law of the establishment. He offered not a word of remonstrance or complaint against such outrageous display of arbitrary power; indeed he rather encouraged her to play the imperial role on the grandest scale. The day would come when she would have a little domestic kingdom of her own, and it was high time she was learning how to govern it. Like other vice-

royal personages, she was frequently a trifle more exacting and unnecessarily fussy than there was any occasion for; and she never failed to resent the least hint that she was in any wise departing from the established rules of the legitimate sovereign. "Ole Missis didn't do dat way" was an affront not to be tolerated, even from Aunt Dinah, a venerable domestic oracle whom her mother often deigned to consult. Miss Lucy was not content with sporting the tawdry trappings of place; her maxim was, *Aut Cæsar, aut nullus;* she would be the real fountain of dignity and power, or else not wear the purple robe at all. Errors and blunders she might commit at first; but better these than irresolution, weakness and vacillation. First establish your throne was what she said to herself; impress your subjects with becoming deference and respect of your authority; learn to command; the minor details of administration are easily learned by observation and practice. This was her code, and, to our thinking, Machievilli nor Oxensteirn could have expressed it with more sententious and discerning perspicacity.

The neighbors were wont to say of Lucy that she was her father's own dear child. In certain prominent traits of character, as well as in personal appearance, there was a striking likeness between father and daughter. The same sunshiny and mirthful disposition; the same self-reliance and firmness, blended with gentleness and forbearance towards others; the same large-hearted and spontaneous benevolence; the same shrewd and penetrating common sense and even placidity of temper; the same instinctive abhorrence of ill-natured carping and evil-

speaking—in a word, every quality for which the one was noted found its counterpart in the other. If not the bonniest, she was the most irresistibly charming and winsome of lassies. Her figure was slight, though far from being fragile, and her every movement was the perfection of unconstrained grace. Her complexion was a rich combination of unrivalled tints; her temples were literally crowned with a golden diadem of sunny locks; her eyes, the color of the cloudless sky, beamed with playful mirth and mischief, and her smile was a foretaste of the joys of heaven. She had her mother's rare gift of music, and her voice was melody itself. True, the harpsichord was the only instrument she had ever learned to play on, and singing simple ballads and hymns was the extent of her vocal attainments, but in these her execution was unrivalled, and she was justly regarded as a musical prodigy in all the region around and about.

Her sweetest songs were those of her father's native land. She had the whole of Allan Ramsay's collection by heart, and she learned them not merely for the sake of gratifying Mr. Graeme's clannish devotion to the customs and associations of Scotland, but because there was an indescribable charm to her in the language itself, which rendered it so far superior to her mother tongue in expressing the tenderest and most exquisite touches of sentiment, humor and pathos. In this way, too, she acquired so great familiarity with the dialect and current literature of Scotland, that between her mother and herself, her father was never at a loss for a pleasant companion in his rambles whenever he felt inclined,

as he often did, "to gae daunering like a ghaist amang the sweet and mournfu' memories o' lang syne."

And when the morning and evening air was vocal with her delicious warblings, he was never heard to lament that there were no linties in the Bonhill woods. Thus joyous and loving, tender and true, surrounded by all holy influences, enshrined in her happy home like a pearl in its shell, grew into the perfect form of modest maidenhood, this "so fair a thing, so free from mortal taint."

To-morrow come and gone, Miss Lucy Graeme will have reached her eighteenth birthday. The joyful event is to be celebrated with appropriate festivities—with music, dancing and feasting, amid the happy congratulations of her numerous young friends and admirers. The invitations have gone out through the length and breadth of the neighborhood, and there is sure to be a goodly gathering of the beauty and chivalry of the Old Dominion under Mr. Graeme's hospitable roof-tree. In those days a wedding was the especial grand occasion for the display of cheerful hilarity and festive munificence; but then, as now, and as it ever will and ought to be, young folks would be young folks, and they were not slow in finding or inventing pretexts for frolic, fun and glee, as outlets and safety-valves for the effervescing spirits of abounding gaiety and light-hearted mirth.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE friends have returned from their visit to Bonhill. A fire has been kindled in the library, and there we now find them. The visitor is reclining negligently on the sofa, loosely arrayed in dressing gown and slippers, garterless stockings and open shirt collar, and enjoying, to the utmost degree, the luxurious ease without troubling his head about the dignity of the position. He looks dreamily up at the ceiling, and runs his fingers through his hair in a ruminating way. In striking contrast to this picture of musing indolence, mine host is sitting bolt-upright in a straight-back chair, with a resigned and martyr-like aspect, presenting a complacent exhibition of the loftiest qualities of heroism and fortitude under the most trying circumstances. He is gazing fixedly at the rugged bust over the mantle-piece, and is obviously rehearsing in imagination the part of the redoubtable warrior in the famous scene where the murderous club is hovering over his devoted head, and he, wholly in the dark concerning the humane intentions of the lovely Pocahontas, swears a soldierly prayer or two preparatory to taking final leave of his senses.

Carleton (*loquiter*).—"Dick," said he, "I am delighted with your Scotch neighbor; was never more agreeably entertained than I have been this evening, saving your delectable company."

"Ah, indeed," was the reply; "I am heartily glad you were so much pleased with your visit. It is a pity, though, we did not stay to supper. Such ambrosial porridge, such nectareous usquebagh, and, O *Apicius!* what a hantle o' gude eating there is about a swine!"

Harry.—"Don't be a fool, Dick. I hope you have not repeated that contemptible saying of Dr. Johnson at my expense. The joke would have been sorry enough in the mouth of a clown; coming from a grave moralist, it was simply disgusting."

Dick (paying no regard to the energetic disclaimer).—"I say, Harry, what a deal of humor there is in those lines of Churchill. You remember? The "Prophecy of Famine."

> Two boys whose birth, beyond all question, springs
> From great and glorious, though forgotten kings,
> Shepherds of Scottish lineage—

I forget the rest, but it was intensely witty and droll—the part about Sawny and Jockey, and the Highland lass who scratched her lover into rest and sank pleased and hungry on his breast."

Harry.—"Stuff and nonsense. Churchill was a coarse, vulgar calumniator—just what Hogarth painted him—a beer-drinking bear in a dirty, black gown."

Dick (still impassably severe of mein).—"Of course you undertook to enlighten the benighted Jockey

on politics and got a taunt of one that makes better fritters of English than Parson Hugh in the play, 'Hout, tout, lad; dinna fash yer noddle wi' sic and orra deal o' fusionless whigmaleries, it's fient a bit else but an auld toot on a new horn, yer screed o' independence and a' that. What ken ye noo o' the steam engine?'"

"Admirably mimicked, Dick," cried Carleton, clapping his hands with delight and laughing heartily. "What a genius you have for the languages. But *amor vincit omnia*, to win the daughter you would learn to gabble all the barbarous dialects that were ever grunted or squeaked since the building of Babel. Is Miss Lucy like her father?"

"The young lady," replied the imperturable Richard, who all this while had not taken his eyes from the effigy of the Jamestown hero, "is reputed to possess the combined excellent qualities of both her parents. In personal appearance, she is strikingly like her father."

Harry.—"Then, sir, I give you fair warning; look to your girth and stirrups, I am coming at you full tilt."

"I accept the gage, most peerless mirror of knighthood," retorted Dick, "and will contest the prize in accordance with the ancient laws and usages of our illustrious and never-to-be too highly extolled order."

"Gallantly spoken, renowned Cid, Amadis de Gaul, Guy of Warwick, or—"

"Captain John Smith," exclaimed Dick, with emphatic gusto; "he is my *beau-ideal* of chivalry; worth an army of your huge iron-clad, spine-cleavers

of romance. Where would we be now if it had not been for him?"

Harry.—"A shrewd question, truly, Sir Knight; in my opinion, we might have been in a much worse place. But as Horatio says in the play, that were to inquire too curiously. I agree with you; the Smiths are an ancient, honorable and powerful clan, and our John Smith, of glorious memory, was the greatest son of Vulcan that ever forged a horse-shoe or a thunderbolt. If he had only rounded the period by marrying the dusky maiden he would have been the bright, particular star of chivalry, *totus, teresatque rotundus!* By the beard of the immortal Cid Hamete Ben Engeli, he should have married her had she been a common scullery wench, and her complexion the 'shadowed livery' of the burnished sun,' instead of being what she really was—a royal model of innocent simplicity and untutored loveliness,—copper-colored, to be sure, *sed ne nimium crede colori!* Honor bright, don't you consider that to be a black spot on the otherwise untarnished escutcheon of the paragon of Smiths?"

Dick.—"I don't view it in that light. Suppose he did not love the girl?"

Harry.—"Answered like the silly, sighing Strephon you are. What had love to do with it, simpleton? It was a question of sheer gratitude; and, more Latin for you, the poet tells us, *ingratum si dixeris, omnia dices!* It was most reprehensible conduct in Captain John Smith, say what you please; and history will set a cross mark against it in spite of the brilliant renown of his warlike deeds."

Dick.—"He wasn't near so much to blame as

was the pious founder of the Roman colony in his treatment of Madam Dido; and isn't he cracked up by Virgil and the rest as a marvellous proper man?"

Harry.—"It is not a parallel case, my boy, by any means. Æneas' work had been allotted him by inexorable fate, and espousing the pretty Dido was not included in the programme. He was like Ulysses dallying at the Calypso isle while Ithaca was yet afar. With Captain John Smith it was entirely different. There was nothing to prevent his taking a wife at the time; and to my mind, there was poetic fitness in his offering his hand to the generous woman who had saved his life, and who, laying aside the prejudice of caste, was worthy to mate with a hero; but he did not do it, and the romance was sadly marred."

Dick.—"For that matter, there was ever so thrilling a tragedy spoiled on that memorable occasion. If, as you surmise, this lovely Ariadne of the western wilds was so frantically enamored of our hero, why in the name of Melpomene did she not jump in the river and drown herself, when she saw it was a hopeless case?"

The sprightly cavalier was nonplussed by this unexpected turn of the subject.

"I cry quits, Dick," said he. "And now, sir, explain, where were your manners that you did not introduce me to the Bonhill beauty this evening?"

"That's the crow you have to pick with me, is it?" replied Dick. "A pretty question, indeed. I might as well ask, where was your gallantry that you did not pay due homage to the lady in ques-

tion? You told me your business with Mr. Graeme would not take up a minute's time, and there you were closeted together, like a couple of sage privy councillors, for two mortal hours. After the interview, you sent me word that you were ready to go, and I obeyed your wishes. You did not once mention the lady's name."

Harry.—"All right, old fellow; the fact is, I preferred making my first bow *en grand tenue* to-morrow night, and as I found Mr. Graeme to be most excellent company—" ("And his wine did not smack of creosote," interjected Dick.) "And you were not at all averse from having Miss Lucy all to yourself in the garden, there is—"

Dick.—"Nothing more to be said on the subject."

Harry.—"No—yes, Dick; about this Frenchman, now, I am consumedly puzzled—"

Dick.—"So am I."

Harry.—"How so?"

Dick.—"Just to know what the pesky, outlandish jack-a-dandy is to you, that you should be taking so much trouble on yourself about him and his affairs."

Harry.—"Exactly what your good Scotch neighbor remarked, booby, only he was not so emphatically polite in his manner of putting the question."

Dick.—"Mr. Graeme? what the deuce does he know about the Frenchman?"

Harry.—"Nothing, further than that he is the guest of Col. Littleton, who picked him up in Maryland when he went to fetch his daughter home. Still, there was no call that I could see for the remark he made—that he did not deem it incum-

bent on him to be 'speering after ilka sorner in the hale country side.' The topic was evidently distasteful, and he dismissed it with little ceremony. What possible grudge can he have against this Mr. Conrad?"

Dick.—"Mr. Graeme is the last man in the world to form unfavorable opinions of people without just cause. I'll be bound he has a good reason for his apparent incivility."

Harry.—"There's the rub—that same 'good reason'; but now I think of it, let's have that little romance you spoke of; I'm just in the mood for listening."

Dick.—"The mischief you are; well, anything to keep your everlasting tongue quiet for a brief space."

So saying, he went to the table, and unlocking a drawer, produced a folio as large as a merchant's ledger; then having drawn the table nearer the fire, placed on it the light from the mantlepiece, and opened the book at the proper page.

"There, voracious quidnunc," said he, "the feast is prepared; come and satisfy your curious soul."

"Thanks, my very kind host," retorted Carleton; "I much prefer getting satisfaction through the medium of my ears, first and foremost, because I am not inclined to change my pleasant berth; and, secondly, and chiefly, because it would take away the relish from the repast for me to have to spell my way through such 'a d—d cramped piece of penmanship,' so take your seat and begin, there's a good boy."

"A plague on his impudence," muttered Alloway, mechanically dropping into the chair. "Call that a

bad hand; why, I can read it like a book." With which boastful assertion, he snuffed the candles, cleared his throat, and launched *ore rotundo* into "My uncle's story."

CHAPTER IX.

IN the Autumn of 17—," said uncle, "I set out from Geneva, where I was sojourning, for a ramble on foot through the northern provinces of Italy. Traveling at leisure, I took no definite route, but wandered from place to place as momentary fancy or inclination dictated. In this way, I found myself in the midst of a wild and picturesque region among the mountains of Tyrol. Loitering incautiously to view the numberless sights of natural interest which met my gaze at every step, darkness overtook me some miles from the ancient city of Meran, where I expected to spend the night. I was on the top of a mountain, the road was rugged and dangerous, and to make the situation worse, an ugly storm was rapidly approaching. In this strait, I looked around for the nearest place of shelter, and seeing a thin column of smoke curling up from the depths of a gorge apparently but a short distance off, I turned my steps in that direction. Clambering down the mountain-side with much difficulty, when near the bottom, my course was arrested by a bold rivulet, which went dashing and foaming over its rocky bed, making an insuperable barrier to my further

progress. It was too late to turn back; I was fearful of losing my way, and thinking it safest to follow the course of the stream, I groped along through the thick copse in search of a crossing. I had gone but a little way, when a treacherous stone slipping under my foot, I lost my balance and fell over the bank into the torrent. I remember feeling one pang of excruciating pain, and then all was dark. When I awoke to consciousness, I was lying on a couch in a dimly lighted room. Two persons were standing by the bedside—a man and a woman. 'Holy Virgin! be praised,' I heard the man say in a whisper, and in the Italian tongue, 'he lives; the tea, Joanna.' He placed a chalice to my lips, and I swallowed the contents, which were not ungrateful to the taste, at a draught. What the decoction was, I know not; but its effect was magical. In a twinkling I was so much revived as to ask where I was and how I came there. I was told that I was at the manse of the curé of a neighboring hamlet; that luckily the noise I made in falling into the water caught the ear of a dog at a chalêt close by, whose baying brought some shepherds to my rescue. By them I was extricated and conveyed to the manse in a senseless condition. I was nearly drowned, but otherwise my injuries were not serious—a sprained ankle and several painful bruises made up the catalogue. My good physician, the curé, assured me that I would be well taken care of, and bade me be quiet for the rest of the night, which injunction he reinforced by giving me a composing elixir of some kind. Next morning I was well enough to leave my bed,

although disabled from walking by the injury to my foot. There was nothing to do but to wait patiently for it to heal before pursuing my journey, and to this lot I was easily reconciled on finding in my host not only a kind and skillful leach, but a most agreeable and interesting companion. The spot itself was very attractive, and the window of my room looked out on a romantic scene. A short distance from the house the rivulet widened into a lake some miles in extent, which was completely engirdled by mountains. On the opposite side, perched upon a lofty crag, was a half-ruined castle, a relic of the feudal times. This is so common an object in that country, that it soon ceases to attract the attention of the tourist. Each has its store of dark and dismal legends, which the cicerone recounts with hideous sameness of circumstance and detail. Of course the castle across the lake was no exception; but having supped full with supernatural horrors, I felt little inclination to learn its history. For that reason, I was not prepared to hear that it had recently been the scene of a tragedy of the most harrowing description.

"It was the morning of the day I had fixed upon for my departure. I was sitting on a bench in the garden reading, when the curé came to me. I saw from his countenance that he had something of more than ordinary interest to impart, and putting aside my book, turned toward him inquiringly, as he seated himself by my side. 'Doubtless,' he began, 'you think it was what short-sighted mortals call an accident that turned your steps hither; am I not right?' The question took me by sur-

prise. I replied, that while I believed that all our acts were directed by an over-ruling Providence, yet, not having the gift of prophecy, I was unable to discern what there was of special significance in the event to which he referred. 'You are wise, my son,' said he, 'to cast from you the Atheist's doctrine of blind chance; every word and deed of men, casual and light as they may seem, have an everlasting import for good or evil; are entered up on one side or the other of the dread account book of eternity. It was the hand of God that guided you to this place, for a purpose which I will presently explain. One night last March, while a snow storm was raging, the shepherds at the chalêt on yonder mountain were aroused by the loud baying of a dog, and going to see what was the matter, found a man in a helpless condition not a stone's throw from the spot of your misadventure. In obedience to my standing injunction, they brought him at once to the manse. He was the veriest wretch my eyes ever beheld, the merest shadow of a human being in the last stage of misery. I did all in my power to restore him, but my efforts were fruitless. After lingering a fortnight, he died of simple inanition. Before breathing his last, he confessed himself of a crime which made my blood run cold; he was the victim of remorse. I had great difficulty in understanding his broken and, at times, incoherent narrative; but this was the substance of it. The man was a Neapolitan, a servant of Don Jacapo Torella, whose family is one of the most wealthy and powerful in that kingdom. This man, the master, was such a villain as only

can be found in that land where Satan holds undisputed dominion. He had an uncle, Don Lelio Torella, a virtuous, good man, whose dwelling there was as solitary as Lot's in Sodom. He was of a somewhat eccentric disposition; had been liberally educated; was fond of letters and the company of learned men, and led a retired life at his villa near the city. By his tact and abilities he had contrived for a long time to keep clear of political broils, and to maintain a strict neutrality in the struggles of contending factions. He was a bachelor; with him lived his niece, the only child of a sister, whose husband, Eustace Conrad, was killed in the affair of Villetri, fighting on the side of Germany. He was of Saubian origin, as his name implied, and was of royal descent. The policy of Charles the Bourbon, then King of Naples, was to conciliate all classes of the old nobility and higher orders, and he so far succeeded in this as to draw even the inveterate Don Lelio from his retirement, and persuade him to take office at the court. Here his caustic wit and haughty bearing kept him in hot water with the prime minister, who was a man of narrow views, of plebian origin, and head of the third estate—then beginning to exert a controlling influence in public affairs. There was at that time a young officer attached to the garrison of Castle Nuovo, who was a special favorite of the king; he was known as Don Henri Campabello. He was of English parentage, and had entered the service of Naples as an adventurer, or soldier of fortune. He was described as a man of extraordinary personal graces, strangely contrasting

with those of his own rank by whom he was surrounded.

"'The King was an ardent sportsman, and in his hunting excursions Campabello was his inseparable companion. As was to be expected, this marked preference of the sovereign for the society of a foreigner was very distasteful to the native chivalry, with all of whom, except his comrades-in-arms, he was in constant danger of open rupture. There was another person in whose eyes the young officer found particular favor; this was Constance Conrad, the beautiful niece of Don Lelio, and it was soon apparent that the old nobleman, too, regarded him with far more esteem than he did any other of her numerous suitors.

"'In course of time, Don Lelio fell into trouble at court, having quarreled violently with Tanucci, the premier, and in a fit of displeasure retired to his villa. Campabello's rivals, chief of whom was Don Jacapo Torella, now redoubled their efforts to degrade him in the king's estimation, and with the aid of the all-powerful minister, so far succeeded as to prevail with Charles to order him away to a distant garrison on the plausible pretext of its being a more honorable station. But before the king's command was made known to Campabello, it was discovered that he had been secretly married to Constance at the instance of Don Lelio, who was resolved to disappoint the schemes of his relatives, whom he detested, while at the same time he dreaded their enmity. The discovery was the signal of the terrible troubles which followed in rapid succession. On some frivolous accusation, easily invented

in that country of diabolical plots, Don Lelio was rudely seized and thrown into the dungeons of the Vicaria, and shortly afterwards Campabello and his wife, with their infant child, disappeared from the scene of thickening dangers. Aware of the implacable nature of their enemies, they took every precaution to conceal their retreat. Whither they fled was known only to one trusty servant, who insisted upon sharing their lot. Alas! that this poor, devoted friend should have been the innocent cause of the mischief which afterwards ensued.

"'Campabello and his wife were naturally much concerned about the fate of Don Lelio. After the lapse of two months, no longer able to restrain their anxiety, they despatched their attendant, Guillame, on a secret mission to Naples for news. The messenger returned in safety, but he brought with him the worst tidings their fears foreboded. The old nobleman did not long survive the brutal outrage to which he had been subjected, and Don Jacapo had fallen heir to his possessions. Time rolled on. The child, a boy, was now a year old; it is said that he closely resembled his mother, and was exceeding beautiful. He was watched over with jealous vigilance by his parents; and, though they had implicit confidence in his nurse, she was seldom permitted to take him out of doors. One day she went to walk with the child and never more returned. For days search was made for them without avail. At last the body of the woman was discovered floating in the water a short distance from the castle.'

"'The castle!' I involuntarily exclaimed.

"'At the foot of the high rock you see there on the right of that old ruin is where they found her, but there was no trace of the child. His loss was a fatal blow to Lady Campabello, and soon after her death the castle was deserted. This much of the story was current among the villagers when I came here to reside. There was no talk among them of foul play. It was generally believed that the body of the child was at the bottom of the deep lake, into which the nurse had, as they surmised, accidentally fallen. Imagine, then, my horror, when this poor wretch, in accents scarcely audible, told how he had penetrated Guillame's disguise, and thus discovered the retreat of the fugitives; how he had been hired for a large price to avenge his master by slaying his hated rival; how, foiled in that, he thought he could appease his master's wrath by stealing the child, and how, in carrying out that fell design, he had hurled the poor woman headlong over the precipice into the lake before she could cry out and give the alarm. He carried the boy to Naples; but instead of the reward he expected, he was loaded with curses, and scourged from his master's presence.

"'What shall he do in this extremity? It is a desperate alternative; yet he is resolved to make one more effort to regain his master's favor. He makes his way back to the neighborhood of the castle, taking the child with him. He finds it deserted; he learns the lady's fate; sudden and swift the awful retribution comes; terror and remorse have seized upon him. Vile and desperate as he was, he had no thought of harming the

child; indeed, a strange revulsion of feeling now possessed him—he could have no peace of mind until he had found the father, and restored the child to him. Where to look for him? While he was lurking around the castle, he, one night, caught fragments of a conversation between the young officer and his wife, in which he spoke of going to France, to some place near Grenoble. Going thither, he could learn nothing of the object of his pursuit. He left the child in the care of a peasant woman, living near an old chateau, and went on to Paris. Here his evil genius involved him in a serious affray, in consequence of which he was condemned to imprisonment for life.

"'After three years of confinement, he made his escape. His first thought, on regaining liberty, was of the child. He hastened back to the place where he had left it; it was gone; the woman was dead, and all he could learn of the child was that it had been carried away by a stranger—a priest—no one could tell whither. Then he gave up to despair. He became a vagabond upon the earth, and wandering distractedly hither and thither, at last is drawn by some mysterious impulse back to the scene of his inexpiable crime. Ere he reaches it, the blinding tempest rushes down upon him and smites him senseless to the earth. How he was found has been told. He had barely finished his terrible story, when he fell back on his couch and expired. I had listened to many a tale of human suffering and crime, but nothing in all my experience affected me as did the confession of this miserable man. It was ever in my mind, and I

lived from day to day in the hope of hearing what had become of the father and child. The mother's grave is in the village churchyard; I had frequently visited it before, but now it was invested with peculiar sanctity. I went there two and three times every week, always expecting that somebody interested in the unhappy pair would come to inquire for them. Time passed. I had begun to feel that my hope was vain, when one morning, towards the end of June, on repairing, as usual, to the cemetery, I was startled by the sight of a man standing beside the grave of Constance. He leant heavily upon his staff, and his bare head was bent down in prayer. His garments were threadbare and travel-stained, and he carried a knapsack strapped to his shoulders. He was old, and, when in a little while, he turned to go away, I saw that, although his carriage was erect, his step was slow and feeble. I spoke to him. He stopped, and seeing who I was, saluted me respectfully. It was Guillame. I took him home with me, and when he was rested and refreshed, made him tell his story. Briefly, it was this: The morning after Lady Constance was consigned to the tomb, Campabello said to him, "We must part, Guillame; I am going away." Throwing himself at his feet, the faithful creature implored his master, with tears, not to dismiss him. Campabello was deeply touched. "So be it," he said. "In an hour we start for St. Petersburg." Here let me explain what was the secret of Guillame's attachment to the young Englishman. He had been a soldier in the company which Campabello commanded. On one occasion, a subaltern struck him

with his sword for some fancied dereliction of duty. Incensed by the wanton outrage, he gave the officer a blow in return with the butt of his musket, which killed him outright. For this offence, he was condemned to die, and the sentence would have been executed but for the intercession of Campabello, who obtained a pardon for him from the king.

"'Arrived at their destination, the young officer was kindly received by the Czar, and readily given a commission in the Imperial army. His stay at the capital was as short as ceremony permitted. Desiring to be at once actively employed, he was ordered to the frontier. Here, in time, he won reputation and honors in abundance. Ambitious of distinction, and ardently devoted to the profession of arms, he was in the full tide of a brilliant career, when, on a sudden, his health succumbed to the rigors of that inhospitable climate. His death severed the last tie which bound Guillame to earthly objects. He felt that his own end was not far off, and yearning to look once more on his native sky before closing his eyes forever, he had, with toil and pain, plodded his way back to this spot. His prayer had been granted, and now he was ready to die, and wished to be buried at the feet of his mistress. I told him the valet's story; he was amazed and shocked beyond description. Next morning he came to me equipped for a journey—his knapsack on his back and staff in hand; said he was going in search of the child. His dear mistress had appeared to him in a dream in her angelic robes, telling him that little Edward was

alive, and commanding him to go without delay. It was an idle fantasy, but I knew it was useless to oppose his determination. He went, I fear, never to return. You came, or rather, you were brought here more dead than alive. Hearing you speak, I recognized your country in your voice. You were come, I thought, in search of the lost ones. I was mistaken; yet you were directed hither by the Divine Power as the means of bringing it all to light. Is that not plain?'

"Father Manso's narrative made a deep impression on me. The more I reflected on it, the more earnest became the desire to discover the fate of the poor orphan. Yet it seemed to my view an almost hopeless undertaking, and I so expressed myself concerning it to the good man, whose zeal in the matter awakened my warmest sympathy. I had no idea, I said, who the English nobleman was. There were ever so many of my countrymen (I did not think it worth while to undeceive him as to my nativity), abroad in Europe, especially in France. I had met one or more of them at every stage of my travels; but of this one, I had not the least inkling. 'Stay,' said the priest; 'I had nearly forgotten it; look at this.' He drew from his bosom a gold watch, and opening the case handed it to me. I read the engraving, "To Henry Markham, from his uncle Edward." 'That watch,' continued the curé, 'was entrusted to me by Guillame before he went away; it was given to him by his master on his death bed. Now, at least, you know what was the officer's name.' 'Yes,' said I, repeating the inscription aloud; 'but it affords no

clue to the missing child; if it did, I should spare no pains or sacrifice in following it up. As it was, we were groping in total darkness. I could only engage to do the best I could under the circumstances.' 'Go, then, my son,' said he, 'and God's blessing attend you.'

"That evening I set out to return to Geneva. Thence, in a few days, I started for France, traveling through Savoy. On the way I fell ill. I managed, with difficulty, to reach the monastery of Grande Chartreuse, which I had visited once before. There I was tenderly cared for through the severest illness I have ever experienced. When the fever left me, I became the prey of the worst dread which can possess the wanderer in a strange land, and as soon as I was strong enough to travel, I turned my face homeward. Yet I did not wholly forget my promise to Father Manso. As it lay near my route, I went to the place where the miscreant had left the child. The information I obtained only went to confirm his account. The chateau was ruinous and desolate enough. Nobody had lived there, I was told, since the old lord, one Count de Villieures, died, in what year my informant did not remember."

CHAPTER X.

READ on, Dick," said Carleton, as Alloway paused.

"That's all there is," said he. "Uncle had great repugnance to speak of his own sufferings. He had, indeed, been sick well nigh unto death, and his frame was so shattered by it, that he was fearful he would not be able to reach home. He told mother how intensely anxious he was, and how fervently he prayed that he might be suffered to lay his weary burden down on the spot where his pilgrimage begun."

"It is that thought which has ever embittered the last hour of the poor exile," replied Carleton, with feeling. "*Dulce moriens reminisciter Argos.*"

Both were silent for several minutes. At length Dick said:

"You have heard the story, Harry, what do you think of it?"

Harry—"Oh, its well enough as far as it goes; indeed, could not be better for a story, as you say; but it is not much to the point. Campabello! that's Italian for Campbell. Mrs. Graeme was a Campbell, was she not?"

Dick.—"Yes; the clan is legion."

Harry.—"But you told me Mrs. Graeme did not talk like a Scotchwoman.

Dick.—"She was educated in England, I believe. The fact is, I know just nothing at all about her early history; yet I'll be sworn that she has no more to do with that Mr. Conrad and his affairs than the man in the moon."

Harry.—"It may be so; but how do you account for her husband's strange speech?"

Alloway made no reply.

Harry.—"More mystery, Dickon, my boy; the plot thickens, and I am more bent than ever on getting to the bottom of it. Aye," he exclaimed, springing from the sofa, and glaring in true stage fashion at an imaginary apparition, "I'll follow thee, thou ghost or goblin damned, though thou leadest me to the Stygian caves forlorn, 'mid sights and sounds and shrieks unholy!"

Alloway laughed heartily.

"What a muddle you are making of Milton and Shakespeare! Psha, Harry, let the *parlez-vousing*—"

"Buccaneer," suggested his friend, seeing him pause for a word.

"Anything you like. so you send him packing about his business, and proceed to tell me more of your grand military project. Bravo! that's the look —every inch a soldier—in a dressing-gown! See how his bosom glows, and how he pants for the glorious fray; how he smelleth the battle afar off; the thunder of the captains and the shouting. *Vincere est vivere!* that's the motto for a true hero."

A remarkable change had indeed come over the

volatile spirits of the youthful cavalier. His handsome face was lighted up with strange animation; the languid air and light, bantering tone were gone, and he was pacing the floor with quick and nervous steps.

"You misjudge me greatly, my dear friend," he instantly replied, in a somewhat excited and impassioned tone of voice, "if you think I am ambitious of military renown, and long for the fame which is to be gathered in the dreadful field of revolution. Believe me, I do not aspire after the trophies which are won only at the frightful cost of human blood shed in deadly conflict. In my ears the sound of the trumpet is a summons to the carnival of death, rousing in every bosom the 'spirit of the first-born Cain.' War, unless it is waged in defence of our country, our altars and household gods, is cool, deliberate, organized, wholesale murder. In the dark ages, the soldier's trade was the one honorable profession. The sword was the universal arbiter of disputes, the certain badge of nobility, the true emblem of dignity and power; prowess in arms was the only guerdon worthy of attainment. But feudalism was unmitigated barbarism, a scene of perpetual strife, rapine, anarchy; a saturnalia of blood, a horrible orgy of crimes of the darkest hue. The institution of knighthood was the only partial gleam of humanity athwart the black sky; a feeble, glimmering ray of light rendering the darkness more profound. You seem to be looking into an immense, murky cavern of embattled fiends, realizing Milton's description of the abode of the damned. The necessity for an extra judicial

mode of repressing cruelty and redressing wrongs is the strongest proof of the degeneracy of the race. By the laws of their order, these martial custodians of society and vindicators of the sacred claims of honor and chastity were bound themselves to respect the obligations whose violation they so rigorously punished in others; but although they mitigated, in some degree, the ferocity of men, they did not succeed in redeeming the world from the dominion of brute violence. Nay, the ensigns armorial of this boasted chivalry are crimson dyed with the gore of innocent victims of fanatical zeal and romantic enthusiasm—euphumisms for licentious passion and ungovernable rage—sanctified lust, canonized murder. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!* Godfrey of Bouillon led his band of consecrated assassins on to pillage and massacre in sight of Calvary, and years afterwards, on the same holy ground, Richard the Lion-hearted learned his first lessons in the quality of that mercy 'which becometh the throned monarch better than his crown' from the noble example of a Moslem prince."

"Shade of La Mancha! what shall be done with this profane iconoclast?" cried Alloway, as Carleton paused in his flight to rest the wings of his eloquence. "Oh, that I were such an orator as Brutus is!"

"Orator? God forbid!" said Carleton. "One trumpeter of the name will do; it is high time some of us were signalizing our zeal in acts, and I glory in being the first to set the example. There is no lack of splendid talkers among us; they are as plentiful as lawyers of old in Naples. What-

ever you do, my friend, I entreat you will not write me down among the *homines inertissimi, quorum omnis vis virtusque in lingua sita est.*"

Dick.—"Orator or not, you 'hae sae saft a voice and slid a tongue,' that you can say three words to my one. But I have yonder an authority will confound your awful invective. Read what Dr. Robertson says in commendation of mediæval chivalry in his last great work—the 'History of the Reign of Charles V.'"

Harry.—"I have read carefully every word of the book. History has been my chief study of late; especially everything relating to the abominations of feudal despotism. Robertson's laudation of this creature of military genius for its lasting beneficial influence on the manners and customs of a barbarous age, is all leather and prunella. Think of his saying that the germ of modern as distinguished from ancient civilization is contained in the bond of knight-erranty. Why, sir, civilization owes more to the humble mechanic of Mentz than to all the mitres, sceptres and swords of Christendom. The PRINTING PRESS was the mighty engine which battered down the walls of arbitrary power and freed the soul from the bondage of ignorance, error and superstition. To this art of arts are due the ameliorations of human society—all those grand reformations which are now in process of fulfillment; in the institutions of policy; in the canons of religious doctrine and belief; in the essential principles of jurisprudence and the enlightened precepts of government, no less than in the countless appliances of industry and wealth—in everything that humanizes, elevates, refines and adorns human character."

"Well for you," said Dick, taking advantage of a pause in Carleton's oration to edge in a word, "that you did not live in the days of old Sir William Berkeley; he would have hung you higher than Haman for that audacious speech."

"Hold your tongue, Dick," rejoined his companion. "As I was going to remark, I am free to admit that originally the word chivalry was meant to denote the acme of manly virtue, the supreme ideal of private worth, public zeal and religious devotion. But soon the honor of knighthood became a purely arbitrary distinction; a conventional charter of exclusive personal privileges; a merely factitious order of so-called nobility. It was no more prized as the reward of true merit, of courage tempered with gentleness and Christian courtesy; no longer was it the sure evidence of substantial claims to spotless renown. No, it now became the paltry, unprized gift of princely favor; a thing of accident, a toy, a bauble; its lustre dimmed by brutal excesses, and its guerdons the insignia of tyrannical power."

Here Alloway made a desperate effort to rally to the defence of the abused paladins, but he was borne down by the sweeping torrent of Carleton's harangue.

"As for the protection afforded the weaker sex, the refinements of gallantry and all that sort of Sydnean rhodomontade, the charter of knighthood was not the first recognition of the righful province of woman, nor admission of the benignant influence of her gentle sway in curbing the headstrong passions and softening the rugged asperities of savage

man. This uncouth gallantry was a sentimental, spasmodical worship of the impersonations of phrenzied fancy, not the natural spontaneous feeling of devotion, love and deference for creatures endowed with charms and graces which make them the living fountains of the choicest blessings of society. Let us give the old paladins credit for the best intentions in their ungainly schemes of reformation; but in the name of true manhood, let us at the same time protest that it was not a marvellous display of heroic virtue to shield helpless beauty from insult and violence, and to render that homage no generous heart could refuse to *la belle sexe*. And then their immaculate tribunal of justice, their sublime code of honor, their amazing discovery that truth was a Phrygian puzzle which only the sword could unravel. It ought to be enough among Christian people to know that duelling is condemned by the word of God. But examine it on merely human grounds. It is claimed to be the only honorable method of disposing of mortal quarrels between man and man. A combat to be honorable must be fair and equal, and everybody knows that it is practically impossible to put the belligerents on such terms that the advantage will not be greatly in favor of one or the other of them. The challenged party, who is generally most in the wrong, is allowed the choice of weapons, and, unless he be wholly indifferent to the issue, is sure to select the death-dealing instrument with which he is most familiar. But what moral right have you to require the injured or aggrieved party to forego any superiority he may possess? What rule of justice demands that you should take your adversary's weapons, or

even advise him with what sort of artillery you purpose to fight? Think of David's sending Goliah word that he was coming forth to battle armed with a sling and five smooth stones out of the brook, and thereby giving the ugly giant a chance to collect a magazine of boulders and bombard him to death at long range. If men will resort to this sanguinary mode of accommodating disputes, if only blood can wash out the stains of affronted dignity, then assuredly a decent respect for social obligations plainly dictates that the combatants should end the matter with as little ado as possible, and whatever may be the result of the fight, the least said about honor the better. Honor can never be vindicated by bloody reprisals, any more than the blazonry of chivalrous deeds can ennoble the perpetrators of cruel injustice. At the best, what merit is there in being accounted a skillful or a fortunate duellist? It is not Harry Monmouth exulting over the fallen Percy, stooping to pluck the budding honors from that noble crest to make a garland for his own, who appears grandly heroic, but Harry the King, as he is pictured by the divine artist on the night before Agincourt—

"'Upon his royal face there is no note
How dread an army hath surrounded him,
Nor doth he dedicate one jot of color
Unto the weary and all-watched night;
But freshly looks and overbears attaint
With cheerful semblance and sweet majesty,
That every wretch, pining and pale before,
Beholding him, plucks comfort from his looks—
A largess universal like the sun,
His liberal eye doth give to every one,
Thawing cold fear.'"

Having rendered this magnificent quotation in a way that Garrick or John Kemble could not have excelled, Carleton subsided into his former recumbency with the lackadaisical and *insouciant* air of one to whom such oratorical flourishes were—

"No more difficile
Than for pig to squeal er blackbird to whistle."

"Jupiter Tonans!" exclaimed Alloway, "what a Vesuvius of eloquence. And all this tirade because I happened to say that you had the bearing of a soldier, longing to flesh his maiden sword. I recant, Harry. After all, fighting is a wretched trade, and for one, I am willing to forego my share of its gory and grinning honors. Excuse me for quoting Shakespeare, but it is my highest aspiration—

"'To live the lease of nature and pay my breath
To time and mortal custom.'

"Whatever your wise saws may say, death is an ugly customer, come when and how he will; and none the more welcome because he has a churlish habit of coming unasked and undesired. Then, for the glory of the thing, what is there to choose between the laureled crown of the 'hook-nosed fellow of Rome,' and the scalp-locks of various hues which deck the robe of the mighty king of the Wampanoags? And as for those great, hulky bullies of the grand carousal, sheathed all over in 'helm and hauberk's twisted mail,' sword and lance proof, what were their wrought-iron pastimes, their jousts and tourneys, compared with the robust and plucky rencontres of the old gladiators of the Coliseum, who went at it, stripped to the buff, and hacked

the flesh off each other until nothing was left of them but a bloody array of skeleton warriors rattling defiance to death itself? But, sir, do you wish to see my perfect model of a fighting animal? Behold him in the wrathful, red fiend of the wilderness, accoutred for the war-path; the incarnation of real chivalry in naked majesty. Talk of Grecian, Roman, Saxon or Celtic courage and fortitude—

> "'Believe me, prince, there is not an *Indian*
> That traverses our vast *American* deserts
> In quest of prey and lives upon his bow,
> But better practices these boasted virtues.'

"*Pour vivre on se-fait tuer,* is the motto of the killing trade the world over. Between the hero and the brute it is but a toss-up, as you were saying, Harry."

Carleton did not deign to notice this unseemly badinage; so Dick picked his flint, and began blazing away at him again.

"O, for the genius of Moliere! what a comedy I would indite. *Le soldat malgre lui,* worth an army of your mock doctors; a veritable hero, whose natal star was the serenest of the heavenly orbs. For a surety, my Harry is not that famous 'Hotspur of the North,' he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast."

This time the shot told; Carleton was half angry.

"You certainly can make yourself supremely ridiculous when you try, you great, hairy jack-pudding," he exclaimed, snatching up the poker and making a feint as if he were going to run Dick through the body with it. "You know well enough that what I

have said was not intended to decry the profession of arms, nor to underrate the military art. Nobody appreciates the character of a true soldier, higher than I do. The unsullied honors which are won in the field of duty are above the price of rubies; he does not deserve to be called a man who turns his back on his country's foes. But the mercenary wretch whose sword is up for hire; the bloodthirsty creature who fights for the mere love of fighting, who delights in war for war's sake, as Xenophon says of Clearchus—"

"Are all a vile, murderous crew at the best," said Dick; "the moral of all your fine talk is, that wars, like plagues and earthquakes, are unavoidable calamities, and therefore the soldier's vocation will never be out of fashion. Well, as Corporal Nym says, 'things must be as they may.' Don't mind my chaffing, Harry; I know you will act your part as becomes a right valiant rebel, whether you like the business or not. But, I say, when did the Carletons get to be such a rebellious set? the name once stood for loyalty itself."

Harry.—"Loyalty, forsooth! First tell me what makes a rebel before you impugn my loyalty, as you call it."

"What makes a rebel?" slowly repeated Dick; "strange that I never thought seriously of that question before. To be a rebel one must have committed treason in some way. But what is treason? It strikes me that Harrington made a palpable hit in his famous couplet—

> "'Treason doth never prosper, what's the reason,
> For if it prosper, none dare call it treason.'

Harry.—"Precisely so; and hence loyalty is a noun Proteus, which no lexicographer has ever been able to define."

Dick.—"Wait till old 'Taxation-no-Tyranny' publishes the second edition of his dictionary, and we shall have your *Proteus* 'drained in a limbec to his native form.' For example: *Loyally*—a term employed to denote that overpowering sensation of awe and reverence which is inspired by the contemplation of the divinity which doth hedge a king. But we are going to succeed in this struggle, and then we can have a vocabulary of our own, which will put to shame the servile coiners of words who would call a whale a weasel at the bidding of any Royal Dane."

Carleton laughed.

"Glibly said, for orator Mum. Now that he has shaken the reefs out of his rhetorical sails, he has completely taken the wind out of mine."

"And when the muss is over, and we are a free, independent, and supremely happy people," continued Dick, with renewed volubility, "what are we going to do next? There's the rub. I should go for a monarchy if I were sure of a dukedom for myself. If it is to be a republic, then let us have the strongest possible infusion of the aristocratical element. I confess I am, for one, no admirer of pure and unadulterated democracy, and regret to see that some of our state cooks are for putting so much of that sort of leaven in our political loaf."

Harry.—"The current of opinion sets overwhelmingly in favor of a republic. I wish you could see the letters my father has received from every

quarter on this subject, especially those from Col. George Mason and Mr. Samuel Adams. There is no disputing the fact that the republican form of government is the choice of this generation of Americans. If posterity don't like it, why let posterity make one to suit themselves."

Leaving these young rebels to their dish of politics, let us direct the reader's attention to some of the other persons of our drama.

CHAPTER XI.

BY a singular combination of circumstances, it so happens that the anniversary of Miss Lucy Graeme's nativity is one of the days in our story's calendar most crowded with stirring incidents. Despite the evil prediction of the immemorial weather prophet, the dawn we celebrate came not in heavy with clouds and lowering with gloomy forebodings, but was robed in a dreamy mantle of heavenly radiance, which made every object appear as though it dwelt in a perpetual realm of drowsy-headed illusion. Yet it was in reality no fairy-land of shadowy images, enchanting visions and "dreams that wave before the half-shut eye"; on the contrary, it was a breathing, throbbing part of that grand theatre whose curtain was about to rise on the swelling scene of the world's supremest hopes.

As we were saying, the eventful day was come, and Bonhill resounded with the busy note of preparation. It is the little lady-regent's first essay at entertaining on so large a scale, and she duly appreciates the weight of responsibility which rests on her pretty shoulders. Trying as the situation is, enough to tax the resources of the most expe-

rienced adept in the occult science of housekeeping, we have no sort of misgiving that she will not come off with flying colors from the field of her unwonted labors.

Returning from his customary morning ride, Mr. Graeme found the house, as he would say, turned "heels-owre-gowdie" from attic to cellar. Everywhere the genius of distraction reigned supreme. Even the paternal sanctum had not escaped the invasion of the common enemy of peace and quiet; it was undergoing a complete overhauling and setting to rights, preparatory to being dedicated to a variety of unheard of uses, and especially for the behoof of those elderly persons who preferred a rubber at whist or a game of vingt-un to the boisterous attractions of fiddling and dancing. Only his wife's chamber was sacred ground; but the self-respect of the worthy gentleman revolted at the notion of being held a prisoner in his own castle, and calling after the boy who was leading his horse to the stable, he determined to make his exit from the scene of domestic din and disorder. As he was leaving the hall with that view, he was intercepted by his daughter, who came tripping up to him with an open letter in her hand, and in the most aggravating manner actually carolling a stave of one of his favorite songs.

"Nae luck about the house!" he exclaimed, taking the words from her mouth, and trying his best to preserve an awkward assumption of outraged dignity. "Is this yer manners, to drive a body out o' doors with your clatter and skirling eneugh to distrackit auld Nick; and he yer ain dear faither."

"I am sure the poor, persecuted body could make himself very comfortable up-stairs in mother's room," was the provoking reply to his grievous complaint.

"In yer mither's room; a douce answer to a ceevil question. Hech, sirs! a pretty pass, the head o' the family maunna hae his ain seat in his ain house. That gate belyve I shall be e'en begging your leddyship's permission to wear my ain breecks. What are ye snirtling at, ye little imp o' the deil? Let me catch ye grinning at me again, an' I'll gie ye that will gar ye laugh out o' the wrang side o' your mouth."

The threat was aimed at the luckless urchin who had brought the letter for Lucy from Clifton, and who was detected in a broad grimace at what he seemed to think was very rare fun.

"Alack, alack!" cried Lucy, catching him by the lappel of his coat, and looking up at him in a commiserating way, "how I do pity the poor head of the family; if he is well nigh daft at the clatter and skirling of the scrubbing-brush, what will become of him when he hears the dinsome clamor of the dancing and deray to-night?

"'The cushat croods, the corbie cries,
The cuckoo couks, the prattling pies
To keek hir they begin;
The jargon o' the jangling jays,
The craiking craws, the keekling kayes,
They deaved me with their din.'"

An apt representation of the melodious discord one hears in a room full of gay revellers, all laughing and talking in an undistinguishable jumble of

hilarious sounds, and she recited it with such humorous effect that Mr. Graeme's sides fairly shook with laughter in spite of his efforts to maintain his gravity. Yet there was a mischievous twinkle in his eye as he chimed in with his daughter's merry mood.

"Hout tout, lass," he exclaimed, as soon as he had recovered his breath; "gang awa wi' your daffin. Ye dinna really suppose that I care a bodle mysel for your noise and dirdum and a' that; I was only just the moment thinking what the gude minister will hae to say anent the matter; he'll be sair mistrysted, I hae nae doubt, at sic a sight o' wardly vanity."

Instantly the tables were turned; the mischief-loving damsel was transformed as if by magic into a ludicrous picture of mingled consternation and chagrin.

"Goodness sake! papa, you don't mean to tell me that Mr. Waddell is coming to-night?" she faltered out.

The old gentleman made no reply in words, he merely shook his head solemnly sideways and downways, as the sly twinkle lurking in his eye grew more and more intolerably wicked. To account for this sudden revulsion of feeling on Miss Lucy's part, it is necessary to remark that Mr. Waddell was the famous "new-light" preacher, who, it had been given out, would hold forth in the parish church on the next Sunday, and who was expected to make his quarters at Bonhill towards the close of the week. Now, there had never been a dissenting minister in that immediate neighborhood within

the memory of the oldest inhabitant, and the prevalent opinion of such a character was far from flattering, or expressed in very reverential or even respectful terms. He was generally looked upon to be sour, peevish, cross and splenetic, with an elongated, kill-joy visage, a harsh, whining voice, which "entuned in the nose full swetely," and with a garb to match these prepossessing endowments of the most puritanical pattern. With all her respect for her father's pronounced religious predilections, Lucy had been insensibly impressed by the obnoxious popular description of the itinerant preacher of the period, and the idea of having one of the number in the house on a day which had been set apart for festivity and jollification was anything but pleasant to contemplate. Then she knew that Mr. Graeme would be mortified beyond measure if his visitor was not agreeably lodged and entertained with the exemplary courtesy and respectful attention which was due to his sacred calling, and she was naturally apprehensive concerning his reception at the hands of the more thoughtless of the gay company, who might be disposed to resent the presence of a rigid presbyter as "an infusion of myrrh into the festive goblet." No wonder, then, that she was dismayed at the suggestion of Mr. Waddell's intrusion on the scene of pleasure, and looked as if she was ready to cry with vexation. Mr. Graeme's heart melted at sight of her extreme discomfiture.

"Dinna greet, lassie," said he, kissing her affectionately; "ye maunna mind my daffin. The minister will na come before to-morrow e'en, so Jamie

Gordon writes. What hae ye got there?" he asked, glancing at the letter in her hand.

"It's only a line from Mary Littleton," replied Lucy, "to inquire when the *Katrine* will sail."

Mr. Graeme pricked up his ears at this announcement, but his countenance immediately fell as she added:

"The information is particularly desired by the strange gentleman."

"The strange gentleman?" he sneeringly repeated; "I dinna ken why he's aye speerin' after the vessel."

"That's Mr. Conrad's affair, my dear sir," retorted Lucy, who had not yet forgiven him his cruel joke. "What answer shall I make to the polite request of your *bubbly-jock*, for such he certainly appears to be from the way you speak of him."

Again her father laughed heartily. The popular anecdote of the half-witted gowk who had such a mortal fear of the great, gobbling turkey-cock was one of his jocular stand-bys.

"The unnatural bairn," he exclaimed, "aye shootin' at her auld faither wi' his ain gun. Ye mind the story then? But what gars ye think I am sair hadden doun by the bubbly-jock?"

"Because," was the unexpectedly round response, "you give yourself more concern about him than I can see any reason for."

Mr. Graeme's face reddened a little at his daughter's bluntness; but his displeasure, if he really felt any, vanished the moment he met her rallying glance.

"Weel, weel, lass," said he, "ye are na far wrang;

it's sinfu' idling o' precious time, if it is naething warse. Sae, ye maun, just tell the young leddie or the —."

"Bubbly-jock," said Lucy.

"Gentleman," continued her father, with reproving emphasis on the word; "wi' my respectful compliments, that the *Katrine* will set sail on the first fair wind after twal o'clock the night, and he kens when that will be precisely as weel as mysel."

"That does not sound like a polite message, papa."

"It is een word for word as I got it frae your cousin Ballantine at the store a while gone; but say it to suit yoursel. And now I am minded to ask, did you add the postscript to the letter to Geordie?"

"Yes, sir," replied Lucy, "every word as you desired it—the message about the model of the new steam engine, and the threshing machine, and all; and I also requested him to send me the latest collection of songs—the one just published in Edinburgh."

"A' right eneugh," said her father; "yet how you will get them is anither question. The *Katrine*, I am afraid, is the last vessel we shall see frae the auld countree these mony lang and weary days. It gars me grew to think on't. A waefu warld. It's aye the way o' it, thae folk wha hae maist cause to be freenly and Christianlike and forbearing in a' their dealings with ain anither, are the vera ones to fall out and gae to hacking ilk ithers thrapples anent the right and the wrang o' this and that metapheesical abstraiction, so that there is

never an end o' contention, and strife, and bloodshed, and destruction. I hae my ain gude opinion on the subject; but wha's the use arguing wi' a wheen het-headed callants wha will na hearken to rhyme or reason? I maun as weel, as the saying is, keep my breath to cool my parritch. Ane ither thing, you sent the invitations to the gentlemen whase names I gave you?"

"I did, papa," said Lucy; "although I was doubtful of the propriety of asking Mr. Thompson to the party; his politics, you know—"

"Politics!" interrupted Mr. Graeme, with some warmth; "wha's fule eneugh to talk o' politics and sic like clishmaclavers on a conveevial occasion. I will hae Mr. Thompson and his wife in the bargain; they have aye been gude neeborly bodies, as far as I ken to the contrairy, and his politics is his ain business. I dinna care a bodle for Whig or Tory; I'se warrant I hae them a' dancing the reel o' Tullockgorum before the wee sma' hours the night. And now I maun be ganging over to neeber Alloway's, and hae a chat wi' that young Mr. Carleton; he is a braw lad, and I hae taken a prodigious fancy till him, not that I think ony the less o' Maister Richard."

This last qualifying clause was intended as a salve for Miss Lucy's feelings, whom he more than suspected of nursing a strong partiality for the cantie Laird of Woodbourne, and in whose ears his praise of the captivating cavalier Carleton might have an invidious bearing. But the conscious damsel, lilting forth a merry chorus, frisked away beyond earshot ere he completed the sentence, and

left the good gentleman to chuckle over his threadbare joke as he ambled along the road to Woodbourne.

As we have intimated, the expected advent of Mr. Waddell was looked forward to as an event of uncommon interest, inasmuch as his preaching there would be the very first occasion that a minister other than one of the Episcopal persuasion had dispensed the bread of grace to perishing souls in that vicinity. What gave it additional importance was the fact that the rector of the parish, who was a model of piety and good sense, then rarely to be found among the regular custodians of the public conscience in Virginia, had given formal notice from the pulpit the Sunday before that, God willing, the Rev. James Waddell, of the Hanover Presbytery, would hold services in that church on next Sabbath, and earnestly invoked the attendance of the people on his brother's ministrations. The announcement gave rise to considerable stir among the more strait-laced members of the congregation, especially when it was known that Parson Smith had taken upon himself, without consulting the wishes of the vestry, to tender the use of the church to a person who had been denominated, in the choice language of another clergyman, "a pick-pocket, dark-lantern, moonlight preacher and enthusiast," and ignominiously threatened with the whipping-post if he persisted in his ministerial avocations. But the general sentiment of the community warmly supported the liberal course of the minister in charge, and there was no danger of Mr. Waddell's being sub-

jected to the shameful indignities he had met with a few years before in a neighboring parish.

Latterly, there has been considerable pother in certain quarters over the religious disturbances in Virginia during the colonial times. In the calm light of historical truth, they appear to be utterly insignificant, excepting in so far as they serve to throw light upon the condition of the Established Church, and upon the character and conduct of its ministry. They were a contemptible afterpiece, following the terrible drama of persecution in Europe.

There is no telling, to be sure, to what extent the mischief might have been carried had it not been for the discretion and forbearance which usually marked the deportment of the non-conforming ministers, and the wisdom and firmness of the measures which were taken by Governor Gooch to insure the observance of the Act of Toleration in its true spirit and intention. The established clergy, for the most part, clamorously asserted their claim to exclusive jurisdiction in ecclesiastical affairs, and strove in every way to nullify the operation of the law. The pope, says Selden, is infallible as long as he has the power to be obeyed. The parsons had no trouble in supporting their dangerous pretensions as long as they were aided and abetted by the civil authorities; but when that prop gave way, as was soon the case, the flimsy structure toppled to the ground never to rise again in its pristine proportions. No possible good can come of the attempt to revive the discussion of these discreditable proceedings, which have been made the handle of so much

unjust reproach and ungenerous criticism of the Episcopal Church in Virginia. By common consent, they are now ascribed by all fair-minded persons to their real cause, which was found in the depravity and weakness of many of those who wore the sacred surplice, and who, in their daily walk and conversation, were anything else than examples of what they were sent to preach. Looking back upon the events of that stirring period, this feeble effort of a handful of unpopular ecclesiastics to stem the tide of free inquiry which was sweeping over the land, excites in our breast only a passing emotion of ridicule and contempt.

CHAPTER XII.

"THAT is Clifton you see yonder," said Alloway to his friend, as they were riding over the farm, and having reached an elevated plateau near the river, had halted to enjoy the wide and delightful prospect which the spot afforded. Only a portion of the front of the house could be seen, but that was sufficient to give an adequate conception of the stateliness of the massive, reddish-brown edifice, which occupied the summit of the lofty promontory, formed by the confluence of the two main branches of the N—— river.

It is somewhat a fashion to speak of the bravest of the old colonial residences in Virginia as baronial—a term which is calculated by an obvious association of ideas to convey the impression of an imposing array of battlemented towers, frowning buttresses, and like insignia of feudal pomp and power. Assuredly the proud family seat of the Littleton's was as richly deserving of aristocratic designation as any quadrangular pile of imported bricks in the colony, both by reason of its intrinsic excellence, and of the dignity of its several owners. Still Clifton was by no means baronial in the sense in which the expression is ordinarily understood,

having no sign nor token within or without of the lordly majesty which strikes terror to the soul of the beholder. True, the magnificent Lombardy poplars, ranged in a row and towering so straight and tall that their heads pierced the blue vault above them, might, to a romantic imagination, easily pass for so many faithful sentinels keeping watch and ward over the grisly stronghold of some uncouth giant; but, as the prosy fact was, they simply served the double purpose of decorating, with a tasteful display of exotic ornamentation, the curtilage of a substantial Virginian manor, and of furnishing a noted landmark for the pilots of the various crafts that plied up and down the Potomac. Its dimensions alone excepted, Clifton differed in nothing from its less pretentious and unbaronial neighbor, Bonhill, by which it was confronted from the opposite bank of the river.

The Littletons are a very ancient and eminently respectable family. No African explorer ever took greater pains to find the true sources of the "watery Nile" than we have done in trying to trace the lineage of the Littletons to its fountain head. Their antiquity has completely baffled our chronological investigations, and the reader must perforce be content with the traditionary assurance that our Littletons are genuine scions of the race which came out of one of the innumerable cells in the prolific hive of nations at a period the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, and that they became illustrious in more ways than one in the ups and downs, and ins and outs, of English history. This much may, however, be set down with positive cer-

tainty as an episode which appropriately belongs to our veracious chronicle. An ancestor of the Virginia Littletons was particularly distinguished for his devotion to the royal cause in the great revolution, and was claimed to have been the sole, ingenious contriver of the wonderful machinations which afterwards enabled the fugitive son of the unhappy martyr to elude the vigilance of his implacable pursuers. This infatuated "loyalist" fell into the hands of the stern Protector, who grimly nodded, and off went his head. But on the restoration of the monarchy, his son received the posthumous recompense of loyalty in the shape of a huge slice of the virgin soil of the Old Dominion.

A cool way that Absolute Lord and Proprietary Universal had of cutting "whangs out o' ither folk's leather," as it no doubt appeared to the untutored mind of Mr. Pope's poor Indian—

> "Whose soul proud science never taught to stray
> Far as the solar walk or milky way,"

and who, for lack of astronomical knowledge, had forfeited every right to terrestrial possessions. Possibly he will be duly compensated in that "equal sky," to which he has been condescendingly admitted by the gracious Muse. In this case, the grateful beneficiary of royal munificence entered at once into his vast territorial domain, and we do not learn that there was ever a joinder on the mise to test the validity of old Rowly's letters-patent.

In the after troubles which put an everlasting quietus on the unfortunate house of Stuart, the Virginia Littletons remained at heart faithful to

the cause of their benefactors, and being at a safe distance from the theatre of strife, they were suffered to vent their loyal indignation without let or hindrance, so long as they abstained from committing the overt act of treason against the reigning dynasty. No friendly remonstrance was necessary, it would seem, to keep them in the bounds of cautious circumspection. The bloody fate of their unlucky ancestor was an efficient warning never again to lose sight of the favorite Littleton maxim, "*Nullum Numen abest, si sit Prudentia.*" And whilst their lips overflowed with cheap professions of unalterable attachment to their first and only love, they took good care to withhold their contribution of the material aid and comfort of purse and sword, without which there was about as much likelihood of the deposed Stuarts regaining their lost crown as there is for any one of the present generation of American sovereigns to wield the sceptre of the "coming empire."

This harmless zeal for a lost cause descended as a muniment of title from father to son along with the estate, and hence we find in the present proprietor, Col. Robert Littleton, an uproarious Jacobite in politics, and in religion, what was next of kin to a papist, an inveterate highflyer, the prototype of the latter-day ritualist. With him the Stuart mania was a sort of hereditary disease, which colored and shaped every portent of the political heavens. He was perpetually flying kites "over the river to Charley," and it was the most provoking thing in the world to him that all his neighbors did not religiously believe with him, that the restoration of

his favorites would prove a panacea for every conceivable ill that could afflict the commonwealth of mankind. And he is far from being the only instance in history of such blind idolatry—such insane worship of graven images. At last, however, as we are credibly informed, he was entirely cured of his innate disorder. After the victory of Yorktown the conviction suddenly dawned upon him that the declaration of the United Colonies meant what it said—a plague on both your houses. Then the cherished vision melted into thin air; he submitted graciously to the irreversible decree, abandoned the land of his forefathers to its ignominious fate, joined heartily in the universal "all hail" to the rising star of the Western Hemisphere, and became in the end a blatant disciple of the most advanced school of progressive democracy. But we anticipate.

Notwithstanding his objectionable politics, Col. Robert Littleton was generally esteemed among his neighbors for possessing in a marked degree the amiable traits, rough and ready manners, and really hospitable disposition, which characterized his ideal standard of excellence in an opulent country gentleman, as he is portrayed to the life in Fielding's inimitable page. There was one insuperable obstacle in the way of Col. Littleton in his attempt to play the part of his illustrious pattern and exemplar with complete success. He had no foils to set off to advantage the salient points of imaginary resemblance. The estimable schoolmaster, who had taken his degrees at the University of Glasgow, and who was a Presbyterian of the straitest sect, had his

own orthodox notions concerning the unalterable rule of right and the eternal fitness of things, and these he inculcated, with equal impartiality and due regard for the scriptural injunction, on the delicate sprigs of the house of Littleton and the unkempt offspring of the commune pecus. And so far from favoring the *soi-disant* squires' pretentions to be considered the royal vice-gerent of the parish in ecclesiastical matters, good Parson Smith never once thought of consulting him in reference to the text or duration of the hebdomadal discourse, nor of inquiring into the nature of the dreams that hovered above his cushioned dormitory in the chancel. Yet he not only sent his sons regularly every five days in the week to the old-field school, which was presided over by the heretical Orbilius, but maintained the most amicable relations with the minister, paying his dues punctually in good current tobacco, and quite satisfied with descanting on the affairs of the Church at each stated vestry meeting. For the rest, Squire Littleton, as he came at last to be dubbed by the commonalty, dispensed a generous hospitality in his own house, was no laggard in partaking of the good cheer of his neighbors, and bore his full share in every project which was put forward to promote the general welfare of the community.

The master of Clifton is a widower, his wife being dead years ago. His household is presided over by Miss Theodora Littleton, who is so much older than her brother that she may be said to have reached the indefinable age at which the most sanguine of superannuated maidens become reconciled

to the harsh allotment, which condemns them to wither on the virgin thorn in unpitied desolation. Of this pattern of spinsters, we have only one other remark to make before she drifts out of sight like a sobby log on the swift running stream of our eventful story. She was, from all accounts, an admirable housekeeper, considering that she never had a house of her own to keep, swayed the rod of domestic empire with a firm and even hand, and devoted the hours she had to spare from the cares of office to the ungrateful task of endeavoring to inspire her willful niece with an appreciation of the tastes and fashions which obtained a quarter of a century before the young lady was born. To Miss Mary Littleton, "queen-rose of the rose-bud garden of girls," our devoirs will be paid in due season. The only other inmate of the mansion at present is the stranger guest, whose arrival seems to have created no little commotion in the usually quiet neighborhood. Col. Littleton has another daughter, who is married, and lives in the vicinity of Doughoregan Manor, in the Province of Maryland, and two sons, who are off somewhere at school.

During this interesting digression, Carleton has had ample leisure for an exhaustive survey of the premises. From looking at the old house, his eye roves pleasantly over the fascinations of the surrounding scene. Presently he appears to be gazing intently at some object on the water in front of him. It was the veriest mite of a row-boat, which a boy, with deft and graceful strokes, was making to fly over the water with amazing rapidity.

"There goes your young sportsman, Dick," said he.

"Yes," replied Alloway, "that is Archie, with his inseparable rifle; but I was looking at that fellow yonder in the skiff—a sailor evidently. He must be one of the *Katrine's* crew; what can he want here?"

The man's appearance was eccentric, not to say suspicious. He was creeping cautiously along under the shadow of the boughs which overhung the stream, as if anxious to screen himself from observation, and was plainly watching the movements of the other little craft. While Alloway was speaking, the latter was headed for the landing at Clifton, seeing which, the man ran the skiff ashore, and, jumping out, disappeared in the wood.

"Deserted from his majesty's service afloat, is what that means, Dick," said Carleton.

"Very likely," replied Alloway. "Hallo, Harry, there they are," pointing, as he spoke, in the direction of Clifton.

A momentary glance revealed two figures on horseback—a lady and gentleman—as they dashed around the great circle in front of the house and disappeared in the mouth of the splendid avenue of native poplars and cedars, which conducted them out by the main entrance on the highway.

"My fair cousin, I am pleased to see," continued Mr. Richard, in a tone which was intended to convey the keenest irony and most superlative contempt, "has at last succeeded in finding a congenial companion in her equestrian excursions. She will not have a chance to decline the civility from me in a hurry, will she Don?" (patting the sym-

pathizing sorrel caressingly on the neck). "Come, Harry, let us go."

Running his eyes again hurriedly over the surrounding scene, Carleton, gathering up the reins, turned and followed his companion.

"It is a humiliating confession, Dickon, my boy," said he, taking up the disagreeable topic. "The Chevalier Conrad has the inside track of us country bumpkins. Of course they will be of the party at Bonhill to-night?"

"Having been asked," replied Dick, mechanically, "I know of no reason why they should not go."

"Then," said Carleton, "I mean to tax my wits to the utmost but what I will learn all that is to be known about this gay prince Florizel, who comes masquerading here, to the dismay of the native chivalry."

"You can do as you like," replied Dick; "for my part, I wish Miss Littleton joy of her conquest, and hope she will have the good taste not to gratify your impertinent curiosity."

"Thank you kindly, my pink of good manners," said Carleton, acknowledging the civil speech with his best bow. "Then I am to expect neither help nor favor from you. *N'importe;* I'll wage the fight single-handed and alone, and the honor of the victory will be wholly mine. But why are you so venomously spiteful towards your cousin Mary? Everybody says she is very beautiful, and many sensible people have told me it was next to impossible to resist her fascinating ways."

Dick.—"Did you never see her?"

Harry.—"Yes; once when we were both mere children I remember going with my mother on a

visit to Clifton; she was then a little brown, hazel-eyed chit in a pinafore and pantalettes, and, as I thought, with a considerable touch of the tiger in her composition. We had a pitched battle over my whip-top, and she used her claws to such good purpose that my face and hands smart at the mention of it to this day. From which early experience of her mettle, I would hazard the opinion that Miss Littleton is, at all events, a decidedly plucky girl in addition to her personal charms."

Dick (frowning majestically).—"She certainly does not lack for beauty, and is, morever, as they say, very brilliant in conversation, manners, and all that; nevertheless, I believe she is an artful, designing, heartless coquette."

Harry.—"An artful, designing, heartless coquette! You shock me beyond expression—

"'With every pleasing, every prudent part,
Say, what does Chloe want? She wants a heart!'

A sad want truly. Who reigns o'er hearts, should surely have a heart, and a big one at that. This is a terrible accusation you bring against the 'famed Belinda' of W——shire. Are you prepared with the proofs? Where are the horrid witnesses of her inhuman cruelty? Where the bleached bones of the wretched victims whom this syren has lured to their untimely doom? Come, I insist on your at once producing the *corpus delicti*, as the lawyers say, else the lady is acquitted, and you stand in the pillory for rank perjury. What, dumb as an oyster? It is then even as I conjectured—you can't show so much as the metacarpal of a milk-sop who has been brained with my lady's fan."

The whole of this humorous sally was lost on Mr. Richard Alloway; he had, in the middle of it, taken to whistling after his peculiarly dolorous fashion, not indeed, like the love-lorn lout, for want of thought, but as a running accompaniment to certain unpleasant cogitations.

"Since she is disposed of," he said, musingly, "I wonder who of the lovely dears will next set up for a reigning belle on the stock-in-trade of her ladyship's *lavings*, to borrow Mike's expression. Mike was one day giving me a graphic description of the heartless exactions of some of the landed gentry in Ireland. 'Och, Misther Dick,' said he, 'they be like the *locusses* of Aigypt that Missthress Murchieson (who is Mike's better half) was rading to me about out of the Good Book; they ates up everything as clane as the deck of a man-o'-war, and gives the lavings to the poor.'"

Carleton laughed.

"Pray, who is this Mike I have heard you quote so often?" he asked.

"Mike Burke," cried Alloway, seizing upon the diverting theme with surprising avidity. "Is it possible I have never told you of my Milesian treasure, the most waggishly humorous and irresistibly droll of the blundering tribe of St. Patrick. Let me see, hang me, if I know much more of Mike's juvenile days than I do of—,"

"The black-eyed troubador's," said Carleton smiling, as he pointed over his shoulder in the direction of Clifton.

"The devil," quoth Dick. "However, its of no consequence; he was sufficiently well accredited when

he came here, and has since given hostages for his future good behavior. It was I who got him his wife. Mike, you must know, is a sailor, a genuine old, weather-beaten son of Neptune, with a hand of iron, and a heart—I was about to say of oak, but I know it to be as soft as a woman's. There is no place from China to Peru he has not visited; he was with Captain Byron in his last cruise, and sailed with Captain Cook in his first voyage around the world; and you should hear him tell of the wonders he saw 'ayont the antipodes.' But don't intimate a doubt of his veracity if you value his friendship. Well, he was picked up somewhere by the skipper of the *Katrine*, with whom he made one or two trips—I forget exactly how many—to Virginia. In one of these flying visits he saw, loved and courted in true sailor style, the buxom widow Murchieson, whose late husband had been a tenant of Mr. Graeme, and may be his Scotch red-cousin in the eleventh degree. The widow liked Mike well enough to marry him, but unluckily she, in a gush of sorrowful good nature, promised her deceased spouse that she would not take that perilous leap in the dark a second time without having obtained the consent and benison of Mr. Graeme, and, for what reason I could never rightly comprehend, the old gentleman positively forbade the banns, or what amounted to the same thing, he refused to have anything to do with the matter. Mrs. Murchieson, he said, was old enough to choose a husband for herself, and he knew nothing whatever, good or bad, of this wandering Jew of an Irishman."

"I am sure that was reason a plenty for his refusal," suggested Carleton.

"For Mr. Graeme, yes; but it did not satisfy me. I had conceived a strong passion for Mike, and he was so bent on giving over his nomadic, sea-faring life, and spending the rest of his days in peace and quiet under the widow's tempting vine and fig tree, that I got his captain to go with me to see Mr. Graeme and intercede in his behalf. After considerable persuasion on our part, and an earnest appeal from Miss Lucy, he at length relented and signed the paper I had prepared, saying, as he did so, in his cautious manner: 'Weel, weel, lads, Dame Murchieson maun gang her ain gate, that is, wi' my permission, and gin she finds to her dool she has forgathered wi' a beggar, she maun mak' the maist o' a bad bargain; she kens the proverb well enough.' Mike was happy, so was the widow, and from that day we have been fast friends. But I have never been able to correct one bad habit in Mike. He will persist in calling Mr. Graeme 'yer riverence.' Doubtless he intends thereby the highest possible respect; but the worthy gentleman does not like the idea of being taken for a papist priest, although he has not the holy horror of popery that some people profess."

Harry.—"How has your interesting old sea-dog fared ashore?"

Dick.—"Oh, he is a very model of hen-pecked Benedicts. Like a good many others who have weathered that Cape of Good Hope, he found the land he had reached was far from being the 'cloudless Olympus' of a lover's fancy. Mrs. Murchieson,

as he still calls his wife, has her little pilfering tempers, and when thoroughly roused, her wrath, says Mike, is tenfold worse than the raging sea. But he has his boat, and the friendly river runs close by their cabin, and as soon as a speck of cloud rises on the domestic horizon, he rushes headlong for the beach and puts to sea, no matter for the weather, until the storm ashore has subsided. He informed me once, as a great secret, that he never stood in so much awe of but one other being, which was the 'Admiral,' as he calls Captain Cook, and surely if rank and merit went always hand in hand, no man in his majesty's navy better deserves the title. It mattered not how hard the wind blew, if the captain was in a fret, the cross-trees, said Mike, was a more comfortable berth than the quarter-deck. The piping of old Boreas in his most frantic mood was delightful music in comparison with the terrible clangor of the speaking trumpet in the hands of this born ruler of the roughest of his race. But it is impossible for me to do justice to Mike's hero. Have you read the account of his marvellous voyage?"

Harry.—"Only such snatches of it as have appeared in the public prints."

Dick.—"Then I have a rare entertainment in store for you. What say you to a sail in Mike's fishing smack, and a thrilling chapter or so from his inexhaustible log-book?"

Harry.—"I should like it of all things, next to a cruise with the great 'Admiral' himself. I agree with you in your estimate of Cook's abilities. He has not only proved himself to be the most daring

and skillful navigator of the day, but he has also evinced the highest qualities of a great naval commander. I wish we had a dozen like him in command of as many good, stout ships of war, we would soon teach the insolent, self-styled mistress of the seas that she has no charter to ravage and despoil at will, merely to make good the prophetic anthem of her guardian angels, 'Britons shall never be made slaves!' For was it not so written in the book of destiny, says or sings the mighty bard—

> "'When Britain first at heaven's command,
> Arose from out the azure main?'

And this gasconading twaddle was actually rewarded with the guerdon of a sycophant's ambition, a sinecure office under government! Slaves, did he say? What has he done with the angelic creatures, who were auctioned off at Rome to the highest bidder?"

"Those were unfortunate captives, Harry," said Dick, vainly trying to rescue the "free-born Britons" from a merciless belaboring. "Part of the *spolia opima* of the Roman conqueror."

"No such thing," continued Carleton, giving the reins to his hobby-horse. "Either history is a colossal lie, or these same thrasonical braggarts were little better than a nation of slaves from the day that Cæsar planted his standard on their sacred soil to that on which the Norman despot's iron heel stamped out the last lingering spark of liberty, and they remained for centuries the pusillanimous serfs and villains of feudal tyranny. Besides, they have meekly endured every phase of anarchy and revolution, passed through the flames of religious per-

secution, and suffered all the calamities of lawless usurpation and grinding oppression. And even now they are the obedient, submissive vassals of the vile tyrant, who seeks to bind us with galling chains."

"Breathe awhile, Harry," said Dick, "and at 'em again. Your invective is superb. What does Addison say? Oh, I have it:

> "'"'Tis liberty that crowns Brittania's isle,
> And makes her barren rocks and her bleak mountains smile.'

Was I ranting in good earnest, Dick?" inquired his companion, with an innocent look. "Oh, how I do detest the trumpery fustian stuff called eloquence—all sound and fury, signifying nothing. It was Cortez, I believe, who said that some things should be done before they were thought upon—a proper maxim for a foolhardy, hair-brained adventurer. Yet certain it is, that over-much talking about a matter of life and death importance is apt to beget irresolution and fatal delay in its execution. Many a flighty purpose has gone careering to the limbo of vanity on the furious gale of windy declamation. Has not Patrick Henry said all that can be said on the subject? Then why do not our conscript Fathers declare at once for independence, and cease to talk about it?"

"It will require a legion of light-horse to back the declaration, brave captain," said Dick.

"Yes," replied the impetuous Carleton; "and they can be had at a minute's warning. Every man in Virginia will leap to arms at the first note of that inspiring tocsin."

There was nothing in this eager outburst inconsistent with his previous utterances. He saw that the conflict was inevitable; he anticipated the final result, and his soul was filled with the sublime thought of a young nation liberated from colonial bondage, and starting upon its career of imperishable glory.

At this stage of the conversation, our cavaliers were interrupted by a messenger, who came to say that Mr. Graeme awaited their presence at the house, and glad to escape from their dangerous society, we will invite the reader to continue his round of junketting in more agreeable company.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE lady and gentleman whose appearance gave rise to the foregoing animadversions of Mr. Richard Alloway, in a little while have returned from their morning jaunt on horseback. But it is all too charming—the luxurious effulgence of the glorious autumnal sky—to be imprisoned within doors, and they have barely entered the house before they come forth again, this time equipped for a walk. After a turn or two on the spacious terrace, and around the grand circle, and down the broad avenue, they are finally discovered idly wandering through the groves and glades of the deerless park which skirts the lawn on the side nearest to the river. A gigantic oak has been blown down in a furious gale last summer. It is clinging desperately to life by one frail root, and its proud head, now a shapeless mass of ruin, hangs helplessly over a dismal hollow. To the moralist it presented the familiar symbol of dethroned majesty—of the sure fate that overtakes alike the loftiest and lowliest of mortal men. Otherwise rugged and forlorn, to say nothing of its proximity to the deep and dark ravine, the spot

had none of the attractive features of the poetical trysting-place of "Love's young dream." Yet here the ramblers pause; the gentleman assists the lady to a seat on the gnarled trunk of the prostrate giant, and himself leans gracefully against a shattered limb.

In one respect, Mr. Richard Alloway's portrait of his fair cousin has not exceeded the bounds of truthful delineation. It is the most bewitchingly beautiful face in the world that is looking up at its companion out of a wondrous glory of clustering brown curls, and it is moreover apparent to a connoisseur in such matters that the deep, earnest, adoring expression of those eloquent eyes could not possibly be counterfeited by the most consummately wicked of coquettes. There is no denying the soft impeachment—

> Love in her sunny eyes doth basking play,
> Love walks the pleasant mazes of her hair,
> Love does on both her lips forever stray,
> And sows and reaps a thousand kisses there.

And in her case, these outward and visible tokens of an inward and spiritual grace plainly denoted that love had gone within, and nestled like a dove in the warmest corner of her heart.

But, out upon the "rude Carinthian boor" of a limner, who has done the handsome and houseless stranger such unmannerly despite. True, his abundant and flowing tresses, worn in contempt of the prevailing mode, are the hue of the raven's wing, but they shade a brow and features that are strikingly noble, intelligent and attractive, and

so far from wearing a ferocious or even austere aspect, the full, black orbs have quenched their fiery darts in a flood of tenderest lustre, and repay the lady her loving gaze with usury. He is speaking, and although his language is English, pure and fluent, he makes no attempt to disguise the marked accent which betrays his foreign nativity.

"There is no longer room for a reasonable doubt on the subject," said he, pursuing a theme in which he was intensely interested. "Your late cousin, Mr. Richard Austin, answers perfectly to the description of our incognito. No wonder the Abbé's usual penetration failed him here—he had no earthly ground to suspect that the object of his search was all that time hiding from his most intimate friends. It was his nephew, you tell me, with whom I had the pleasant encounter of the fox hunt? I should not have divined the relationship from any external resemblance to the original of the picture, as drawn by the master of the Grande Chartreuse—the one a frail, delicate, pale-eyed, silver-toned and morbidly sensitive student; the other, a stout, hirsute, bold and devil-may-care sportsman, with the brawn of a Milo, and the lungs of a Stentor."

The lady smiled.

"It would, indeed, be difficult," she replied, "to find two near kinsmen more utterly dissimilar in personal appearance. But you wrong my cousin Richard if you imagine he is only the stature, bulk, and big assemblance of a man. He is a noble-hearted, brave and generous fellow, if he has of late taken up a most unaccountable dislike of me."

"And thereby established his claim to my regard," said Conrad, laughingly. "I readily forgive him his making merry over my ridiculous misadventure; it served me right for coming in at the fag end of the chase to try to rob him of his well-earned laurels. But his behavior in the other case—"

"Nay," cried Miss Littleton, in the same bantering tone, "I reject your championship. Leave me to fight my own battles with this great giant, and you will, in no time, behold a bloodless triumph, no love lost, and no bones broken. After all, it was a trifling matter to quarrel about, and if he is as heartily ashamed of it as I am, there will be no trouble in bringing about a speedy restoration of our former amicable relations. On due reflection, I am convinced that I was the party most at fault. There can be no excuse for the rude and scornful manner in which I repudiated his well-meant intercession in a dear friend's behalf. A woman is apt to exaggerate offences when she is conscious of imprudence in giving occasion for invidious criticism. I remember being exceedingly indignant with him at the time, and I did not scruple to berate him soundly for having been the cause of a painful misunderstanding with the Graemes, to whom I was really attached."

"Did he accuse you flatly of having jilted Mr. George Graeme?" asked Conrad.

"Yes," replied Mary, "or at least his language implied as much, and besides, he called me a little fury, and, I verily believe, he wished I had been a man, that he might take me to personal account. To be sure, he apologized for his angry

conduct, but I was so much incensed at the thought of a rupture with my friends at Bonhill, the result of his awkward intermeddling, that I repulsed his overtures, and thus the matter stands open between us at present. Unfortunately for me, the reputed victim of my artful wiles was gone away to Scotland, and so Dame Gossip had everything her own way. But worst affliction, I had to endure my good aunt's interminable lectures; for, strange to say, she obstinately refused to listen to one word of explanation from me, and charged my delinquencies, as she was pleased to call them, to the account of setting at naught her wholesome admonitions. In such a desperate strait, there was no recourse left me but to fly for shelter to my sister in Maryland."

"In which hegira from persecution, you have furnished another striking illustration of the proverb which has been so often exemplified in my humble career, '*L'Homme propose et Dieu dispose*,'" exclaimed the passionate lover.

"Take care how you bless your stars on the event," replied the wayward damsel, with a saucy glance, "for, if report be true, you have this time experienced the truth of a different adage altogether, and only caught a Tartar for your pains. There, let go my hand and behave like a rational being. And, since you are in the sentimental vein, tell me a pretty love story out of your book of romantic chronicles, and, in return, I will improvise you an Indian legend."

"Another time, under favor, my gracious queen," said Conrad. "You forget I have an appointment

with the Abbé, which I must on no account fail to keep."

"It had indeed escaped me," replied Mary, looking grave. "Are you compelled to go this afternoon?"

Conrad.—"I am; the business between us admits of no delay."

Mary.—"How very provoking. I had set my heart on your going to Bonhill to-night, and being introduced to the company by your proper name and title."

Conrad.—"I fear you will be deprived of that gratification. What is the distance to Yeocomico, the place at which I am to meet the Abbé?"

Mary.—"Scarcely an hour's ride. What is that noise?"

There was a strange rustling sound among the leaves of the fallen oak, although there was not a breath of wind astir.

"Only a bird," said Conrad, replying to her look of alarm.

The explanation was plausible, but it did not allay Miss Littleton's suspicions. As the conversation proceeded, she was repeatedly observed to cast uneasy glances in the direction whence the sound proceeded.

"Suppose now," she went on to say, "that I were to insist upon your deferring this visit until to morrow morning?"

"*Pardonnez-moi, ma belle amie,*" replied her companion; "but it is not a supposable matter. You are aware that the ship is ready to put to sea with the first favorable gale after midnight, and I

am no more a Prospero than you are a Lapland witch or other kind of contraband dealer in contrary winds. Besides, the excellent father makes free use of the imperative mood in his missive, and we have a great many things to talk over. Of course I shall be required to answer for my dealings with a certain incorrigible little heretic, and what have I to urge in my defence? Absolutely nothing. Only a miracle of grace can save me from the awful expiation of an *auto-da-fé*. The Abbé is a master of the art of persuasion, but even his eloquence would be lost on such an obstinate rebel. Convert her! He may as well go with good St. Anthony and preach salvation to the fishes."

At this audacious speech the young lady bridled up with the best imitation of offended dignity she could muster on so short a notice. There was one subject on which these lovers had very prudently resolved mutually to exercise the largest amount of the liberty of liberties—*videlicet*—the liberty of disagreeing. In the archest manner imaginable, and with the aptest exhibition of ironical humor, she held up a taper finger, on which glittered a ring begemmed with costly jewels.

"Since it is to the confessional you are going, my poor penitent," said she with mock compassion, "be sure you carry the sin-offering with you;" then suddenly pouting and affecting the air and tone of injured beauty, which has a right to be absurdly jealous and outrageously exacting, she added lachrymosely, "I believe you love Father Soulé better than you do anybody else in the world."

"Not exactly," said Conrad, earnestly. "But it is quite probable I should have been unworthy of the love of *one* body in the world had it not been my good fortune to have for a mentor, at once the best, the gentlest and the wisest of men. You should have heard what Mr. Carroll said of him if you deem my encomium extravagant. 'Father Soulé,' he said to me one day, in his deliberate manner, 'approaches, in my estimation, as near to being a pure and perfect intelligence as it is possible to conceive of in a finite and fallible mortal.' His learning is only excelled by his piety, and both are unfathomable. He is a philosopher without scepticism, a polemic without acerbity, a priest without bigotry. The most subtle and profound of thinkers, the most captivating of reasoners, the most erudite of scholars, the humblest of believers, he is what Socrates might have been had he too been a Christian."

"A wonderful character, truly, for a Jesuit priest," exclaimed the persistent heretic, "for such I understand is your incomparable guide, philosopher and friend."

Conrad was now constrained to take up the cudgels for his tutor in downright earnest. "Yes," said he, "I do not blush to proclaim it in spite of the late extraordinary decree of Rome. He does belong to that illustrious society which has been so grievously scandalized by the conduct of unworthy members, and his life has been a shining example of its sublime motto—All things for the greater glory of God."

"And pray tell me," retorted the fair disputant,

"whence came the prerogative of your magnificent order to that pious posy? To my thinking, it is of the essence of religion the world over to ascribe all honor, praise and glory to Him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. It is certainly so taught in my Bible and Prayer Book. All things for the greater glory of God? Why it is the soul of Christian worship, the burden of every sacred missal, the universal doxology of devotional piety, and you would appropriate it to adorn the phylactery of an effete monkish institution. That will do, not another syllable, as you are a gallant gentleman; I claim the privilege of my sex, the last word. You began the dispute without warning. I will put an end to it with equal abruptness. You have neglected to say whether or not my poor cousin's death necessitates an alteration in your plans."

"That will be as the good father will decide," replied Conrad, now all meek submission.

"And has not the good father's dutiful son any opinion of his own on so vital a subject?"

"*He-bien!* It is really my poor opinion to which your ladyship attaches so great value." Then growing suddenly serious, he proceeded. "The plan of procedure shall not be changed in a single particular with my consent. The proofs, to be sure, are not sufficient in law; there is one link missing in the chain of evidence which only Mr. Austin could have supplied. But I am not a suppliant of British justice. I expect no redress at the hands of my father's malignant enemies; my lot in that regard is now irrevocably fixed; henceforth, for

weal or woe, I am an American. My private score with a sworn and implacable foe shall not turn me from the line of duty; he may procrastinate the day of settlement, but as a just God reigneth, he will live to see the consequences of his unnatural guilt. To-morrow your father shall know my whole history, from which time I shall assume my rightful name, rank and station."

"Why not allow me the privilege of telling it all to my friends this very night?" eagerly inquired Mary Littleton.

"So be it," replied Conrad, after a moment's reflection. "Provided, of course, that I get back in time to bear you company. Still it is proper for me to inform Colonel Littleton who I am, and to learn what he has to say about the after introduction. You must remember, too, there is another important matter about which he is to be consulted."

The lady looked up inquiringly, but there was no need of explanation; the rosy flush which suffused her cheek showed how truly she interpreted his meaning glance.

"Does Father Soulé approve your sending this letter to the person they call Sir William Markham?" she asked, covering her momentary confusion by recurrence to the previous engrossing topic.

"More than that," replied Conrad; "the letter was originally written at his dictation two months ago. I could not trust myself to phrase it after what had occurred between us." His thin lips grew tremulous with suppressed passion, and a

sudden gleam like lightning from a passing summer cloud shot from the speaker's brilliant eyes. "The bloody reckoning was not of my seeking; my mission to England was for peace and reconciliation, to heal the gaping wounds which civil broils had made in our unhappy house, and I was ready to make every sacrifice but *one* to secure that consummation. Even now, my terms are fair, honorable and just. If Sir William Markham again rejects them, on his head shall rest the guilt of keeping open wounds that may rankle to the death."

The vehemence of his manner, and his lofty mien, elate and instinct with conscious power to will and to do, brought a bright glow of admiration to the lovely features of his companion; but before she could frame a reply, the limbs of the great oak were violently shaken, which startling phenomenon was immediately followed by a dull thud and the crackling sound of breaking twigs, as though some heavy body had fallen to the ground and rolled down the side of the ravine. Conrad ran to the edge and peered over. Then, with a loud shout, he bounded down the bank in pursuit, as fast as the dense thicket of undergrowth permitted. Presently he came panting back, with a small sporting rifle in his hand.

"The scamp was too fleet for me," he said; "but he has lost his gun."

"It is Archie's," replied Mary, "and here he is. What is the matter child? The gentleman will not harm you."

The question did not imply alarm; for barring a

scratch on the cheek, the lad was not hurt, and his buckskin hunting suit was briar and bramble proof; but his face showed signs of deep vexation and shame.

"I'm not afraid of him," he said, his color deepening as he shot a fiery glance at Conrad, who was regarding him with a half amused, half-admiring look. "Indeed, Miss Mary, it was an accident my being here. I saw you coming, and hid in the tree for fun."

"Queer notion of fun, you little eavesdropper," said Conrad.

Again the boy's face grew crimson with indignation, and his eyes flashed defiance at his accuser.

"It is false," he cried. "Miss Mary, you—,"

"Do not believe you capable of such an act, Archie," replied the lady, hastening to his relief; "nor shall this gentleman do you such injustice in his thoughts, if I can help it. Mr. Conrad, this is the little friend of whom you have heard me speak."

"And whose acquaintance I have so much desired to make," said Conrad, with winning courtesy; "I recall the offensive expression; there, my little fellow, take your pretty gun, and with it my hand, and thus, there is an end of it. Now, hie away after that 'bunny" that's chattering down there in the ravine, and leave Miss Littleton and me to finish our conversation."

"Stay, Archie," exclaimed Mary, as the boy turned to go; "who is that man?"

Conrad and the boy looked quickly in the direction she pointed, and saw a man dressed in the garb

of a sailor, some fifty paces distant, walking hurriedly through the Park towards the river. Another moment he was out of sight.

"It isn't Mike," said Archie; "I'll run after him and see—,"

"No, no," said Mary, hastily; "it does not matter. Go on to the house and tell aunt Mr Conrad is going away before dinner, and don't go home until I see you again; I have something to send your mother. That's a good boy; there's a kiss for you."

Archie blushed in acknowledgment of the favor, and, bowing gracefully to Conrad, scampered off as she requested.

"Your page is very obedient, but why so thoughtful, lady mine?" said Conrad, observing that the capricious damsel was following the boy with a serious gaze. Mary started, blushing slightly.

"It is nothing," she said, "only a foolish fancy;" but seeing that he still regarded her with a questioning look, she proceeded: "You remember as we were riding home this morning through the wood, we heard the report of a gun. It caused me to turn my head, and, fast as we were going, I caught sight of that same man skulking among the bushes near the road. He was looking straight at me, and a more forbidding face, though I saw it for an instant only, I never looked on. When I discovered him just now he was peering at Archie from behind that tree in a stealthy manner. At once a suspicion took hold of me that he was dogging the boy's steps for some evil purpose. Quite absurd, wasn't it?"

"By no means," said Conrad; "the suspicion was natural enough. What a spitfire the lad is; it is well for me he was disarmed. I like his spirit."

Mary.—"And if he were eavesdropping, it is precious little he got for his trouble."

Conrad.—"True; what a model pair of turtle doves we are to be sure."

Lovers have an incomprehensible language for which there is neither lexicon nor grammar. Why the other "dove" should spring from her perch and dart like an arrow so quickly across the glade at that innocent allusion, was to the uninitiated observer an unaccountably strange proceeding. Away she sped through the park, nor paused in her flight until she reached the open lawn and caught sight of Aunt Theodora's vigilant face looking out at her chamber window. Then she turned upon her baffled pursuer with a silvery peal of defiance, to which the discomfited swain replied with the baldest pretence of supreme nonchalance.

Passing the reviewing officer with the most precise decorum, the lovers entered the house.

"Now," said Mary, "I must go and have a lunch got ready for you while you are making preparations for your ride."

Conrad's rapturous gaze followed her graceful form as she tripped away on her errand. "Behold!" he exclaimed, in a transport of feeling, "the first gift of my adopted land—a treasure I would not barter for all the wealth and dignities that kings can bestow. The Abbé must surely approve my choice, unless he intends I shall never marry.

How unlucky he should be called away so suddenly. At least we must contrive to detain this vessel, if only for a day. He will then have an opportunity of seeing her before he goes on this perilous voyage." So saying, he hastened to get ready for his journey.

CHAPTER XIV.

IT is the night of the party. Bonhill is aglow with a blaze of glory, and flames afar like a cheering beacon from its hill of pride. Cavalcade after cavalcade of country beaux and belles are pouring in, and soon the jocund sounds of revelry are floating gaily on the palpitating air. Old Uncle Phil, the black fiddler, like another Timotheus, or ebony image of the musical god himself, raised on high, rules the monarch of a season over as goodly a company of fair women and brave men as ever moved submissive to the spell of enchanting minstrelsy. *Chacun a son gout.* Let such as like, "dance after a Monsieur's flageolet," or, if they prefer, "have a set of English viols to their concert;" but for the kind of melody which puts life and mettle into heel and toe, which "awakes the pert and nimble spirit of mirth and turns melancholy forth to funerals," there is no instrument of music which bears comparison with a tuneful fiddle under the skillful manipulation of some sable Orpheus from Old Virginia's shore. O, the wonderful works of

nature! Who would imagine that the soul of harmony resided in the entrails of a caterwauling grimalkin? How the secret was first made known is a question about which there is much diversity of opinion among learned Thebans, so we will cut the matter short by agreeing with the "auld gabbit poets," that

> Jove's nimble son and leckie snel
> Made the first fiddle of a shell,
> On which Apollo,
> With mickle pleasure, played himsel
> Baith jig and solo.

It is the first time that Bonhill has witnessed such a scene of merriment and glee; but not the last by a countless number. Ofttimes have we beheld the like display in those cheery old halls—little or nothing changed, save in the names and costumes of the actors; danced the same minuets and country dances, reels and rigadoons, and cut nameless fantastic capers to the lively strains of the identical cremona bequeathed from sooty sire to son; listened to the like merry din of inarticulate voices and clatter of many twinkling feet; the same gladsome chimes of silvery laughter, rustling of silken folds, and, crowning all, the deft prompter's gutteral tones calling out the figures of the dance—every charming feature as fresh and joyous as on that first night when youth and pleasure here forgathered "to chase the glowing hours with flying feet."

There is no observance here of formal ceremony and staid etiquette; all things are conducted on

that indescribably free and easy plan and decorous regard of unstudied politeness which was the ruling trait of the social gatherings of the olden time in Virginia. The guests are, for the most part, known to each other, and the unacquainted are soon relieved of embarrassment by a general introduction.

The first dance is ended; some of the company are promenading in couples, others enjoying a quiet tête-à-tête in a cozy corner, and, here and there, a little group appears to be drawn together by the magnetism of some acknowledged belle. In the centre of one of these charmed circles shines resplendent the beautiful star of Clifton. Her coming unattended by the strange gentleman was the occasion of much surprise and some disappointment. The explanation she vouchsafed of his absence only served to enhance the general interest, and she was made to run the gauntlet of inquisitive tongues. Having borne the infliction for some time with commendable suavity and good humor, she at length seeks refuge from her tormentors by engaging in a keen encounter of wit and raillery with a sprightly young gentleman, who has only the day before arrived home from a long sojourn abroad. This is Mr. Charles Copland, Jr., late student of law of Grey's Inn, London, where he has performed the customary gastronomical exercises with more than ordinary credit. Though she sustains her part in the conversation with considerable spirit and vivacity, it is evident on narrower scrutiny that her thoughts are far from being wholly engrossed thereby. Occasionally her shafts fly at random, and once in a while she is detected shooting a furtive glance

across the room where Carleton is observed talking to Lucy Graeme in a sedate and earnest manner, which is strangely at variance with the prevailing gaiety.

That arch diplomatist has lost no time in laying his wily toils. Conscious of the delicacy of the undertaking, he had set about it with an adroitness which would have done credit to the genius of a Temple or a Walsingham. While the dance was going on he found a ready pretext for broaching the entertaining subject of his recent explorations to his partner, and so managed that Miss Littleton should hear such significant snatches of the story as to awaken her suspicions and arouse an eager desire to hear the whole of it. Now, it so happened that the object of his artful scheming was at the same time revolving in her mind how she could contrive to obtain certain information from Mr. Richard Alloway of the supposed mysterious adventures of his late uncle while in Europe, and the apparently casual remarks which reached her ears in the rounds of the dance satisfied her that Carleton was in possession of the matter she sought to discover.

Our friend Dick, we blush to record, was so ungracious as to decline to meet his fair cousin's advances towards reconciliation at the half-way house of mutual concession; he was inflexibly offish, stiff and punctilious in his demeanor towards her. With Lucy it was *tout au contraire,* not a word was spoken of the disagreeable past; they glided at once into their former intimate relations and were the Rosalind and Celia of old, forgetful that a

single cloud had ever darkened the heaven of reciprocal regard and congenial attachment. Presently, Carleton joins the group who are gathered around Mary Littleton, and claims her hand for the next dance.

"Would you believe it, Mr. Carleton," she exclaimed, after acknowledging his demand, "here is a gentleman all the way from London by the last packet who cannot, for his life, tell a body a word about the latest vogues? His talk is of nothing but the long-winded debates in Parliament, the grand sights he saw at my Lord Mayor's show, the ghostly mementoes of Westminster Abbey, the monumental mockeries of the hideous old Tower, and I don't know how many other equally dull and stupid things which we untraveled ignoramuses, of course, never heard or read of before, and here I am dying to learn if my *aigrette* is *ā-la-mode*, my hair properly craped, my tucker such as ladies of quality wear, whether, in a word, I be *poin'-devise* in all all my accoutrements."

"I am glad you have come to my rescue, Carleton," meekly responded the crest-fallen limb of the law. "You see now what a fellow gets for being so deucedly patriotic. I heartily wish I had stayed in London after what I have gone through since my return. What a dolt I was to entertain so absurd a delusion. Just imagine my thinking all this long while that my fair country-women were ever so busy, like true Spartan maids and matrons, setting the example of independence—clothing themselves in the products of their own industrious looms and spindles, knitting stockings for General

Washington's soldiers, and doing all manner of self-sacrificing things, and just look at them, tricked out in all their finery, chattering about the latest fashions from London and Paris, and denying me the welcome they would readily bestow on any smuggling pedler of new-fangled haberdashery. Beauty when unadorned, adorned the most! Sentimental stuff! Why, what would a woman be without the—"

Carleton, ever ready, comes to his assistance with a handy tag of rhyme:

> "The powder, patches, and the pins,
> The ribbons, jewels and the rings,
> The lace, the paint and warlike things
> That make up all their magazines?"

"Thank you, Harry."

"Cowley, you mean; the words are not mine," replied the artful chevalier, with an apologetic bow to the ladies.

"Never mind," retorted Copland, "I am not afraid to adopt the quotation, if you are. Why, even Bella yonder—bless her little heart, how she cried when her big brother was sent away and there was no one to play with her—even Bella, I say, now a woman grown, wept bitter tears of anguish in secret when she heard that I had not brought her a new silk gown. Well, there is nothing for me to do but to swallow my mortification with the best grace possible. At least there is a grain of consolation in the loss of your kind favor, ladies, in the consciousness of having duly respected the laws of my country. My entire invoice of imported articles is

summed up in a new book of songs for Miss Lucy, and Scotch high-dried enough to keep my respected father sneezing through a year's siege."

"Pray, tell me, Mr. Censor," said Mary, in the same bantering tone, "what is the harm of our wearing fine clothes, if we happen to have them? Then, sir, you forget that the prohibition is against English goods. You might have bought Bella's gown in Paris, where, I dare say, you spent the worth of a dozen frolicking and sight-seeing with that rantipole cousin of mine, Frank Tunstall, as you told us awhile ago."

"Frank Tunstall! Did he return with you?" asked Carleton.

"No," said Copland; "when I parted from him in Paris he was preparing to set out on the grand tour. Frank is become to be very much a citizen of the world."

"And a greater coxcomb than ever, I imagine?" said Carleton.

"Well, yes," replied Copland; "he has cultivated fashionable fopperies at a prodigious rate; yet, with all his dandified airs and priggish notions, he is by no means such a vapid creature as you think—at least, he is not deficient in spirit. By the way, Miss Mary, I did not tell you how we both came to be in Paris. Well, as I said, Frank's ruling passion is to be a fine gentleman, and being handsome and rich, and well-bred and all that, he soon got the entrée of the *beau monde*, where he sported like a gorgeous butterfly. Could you hear him descant on their daily rounds, you would not wonder that our dear cousins have no time to attend

to the humble petitions with which we, as in duty bound, have been clamorously besieging the throne of kingly grace; they are literally overwhelmed with the grievous cares of their unhappy state which condemns them to oscillate eternally between the extremes of ennui and dissipation. Frank deemed this exquisite mode of killing time to be the acme of refined beatitude, and he was was never a Sabbath day's journey from his darling London, until an unlucky contretemps fell out—,"

"A love scrape with a maid of honor?" said Mary Littleton.

"Pinked a young sprig of nobility in a duel?" said Carleton.

"Neither," replied Copland; "though quite as bad as the one or the other. Returning home one night from the opera, he took it into his head to venture alone into White's, that paradise of *beaux garcons* and *hommes de condition*—anglice fashionable rakes and genteel sharpers—where, not content with the innocent diversion of being plucked for a docile pigeon, he very foolishly suffered himself to be inveigled into talking of politics. Of course, in such a select assembly of loyal blades, the rabble rout of American rebels were denounced, as they should be, and the rash, intruding Virginian was not long in finding himself an unwilling auditor of all manner of scurrilous allusions, objurgations and sneers, poured out without stint or measure on his countrymen. He managed to keep his choler down and sustain the unequal combat of billingsgate and bravado until one of his assailants made some disparaging speech about General

Washington, who, among other claims to distinction, has the honor to be nearly related to Frank on his mother's side. A knock down, a general scuffle and uproar, and all is dark to our hero until he awakes next morning with a dim and confused perception of what had happened, and a humiliating conviction that he was certainly demented to venture by himself in that den full of the British lion's whelps. He was lucky to get off with only a bruised lip and one eye in mourning; but such was his mortification that I had no trouble in persuading him to pack his portmanteau and take the first diligence for Dover. In a fortnight's time I joined him in Paris, where I found him revelling in the elysian delights of the gay metropolis and railing in bad French at everything English in a way that made the natives stare."

"And when is the splendid creature coming back to the land of savages?" asked Mary.

"In the spring, he said," replied Copland. "I shall promise him, when I write, a perfect ovation from *les belles-sauvages!*"

The young lawyer was in rapid retreat when he discharged this Parthian arrow. As soon as he was gone the little coterie dispersed, and Carleton and Miss Littleton fell into line with the promenaders.

The diplomatist begins: "Miss Graeme tells me she expected a rare addition to her company this evening. She seems much disappointed that he did not come; to be frank, so am I."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; the gentleman to whom I allude is Mr. Conrad."

"Oh, my father's guest. I have already endured a siege of questioning on account of his failure to put in an appearance here to-night. Pray, why are you so deeply concerned about it?"

"From a better motive, I beg you will believe, than impertinent curiosity. I have an important reason for desiring to make Mr. Conrad's acquaintance. I am very much exercised over an investigation of certain transactions of your late cousin, Mr. Richard Austin, while traveling in Europe many years ago, and I have a notion that Mr. Conrad can be of service to me in the matter."

Mary was visibly disconcerted by the grave and business-like precision with which he opened the conversation. She regarded him with a look of puzzled surprise.

"Is it a confidential secret, Mr. Carleton?" she ventured timidly to ask. "In your turn, you have said enough to stimulate my curiosity, of which eminently feminine weakness I profess to have my full share."

A preliminary scraping of the fiddle interrupted Carleton's reply.

"The music is about to begin," he said; "we must take our places for the dance."

"Are you fond of dancing, Mr. Carleton?" asked Mary.

"Y-es, with a pleasant partner; usually, though, I more enjoy looking on at others."

"Then, suppose you play spectator this time, and continue the conversation you have started."

"I am delighted you have made the proposition."

"Where are you going, Harry?" cried Dick Allo-

way, as they moved aside to make room for the dancers. "You are wanted here to make up the set."

"Please, Cousin Richard," entreated Mary, "find another *vis-a-vis;* I ask to be excused this one time."

"Certainly, if you wish it," replied the self-constituted master of ceremonies, bowing coldly.

"What a handsome couple!" was the general comment which ran in a whisper round the room as they left.

"Harry is hovering on the brink, Dick," said Copland; "if he fall in, good night."

"Caught in the toils," muttered Alloway to himself, "after the warning I gave him."

In the deserted drawing-room they found a secure retreat from further interruption. Seating herself on the sofa near one of the windows, Miss Littleton artfully adjusted the folds of the thick damask curtain ostensibly, as her glance indicated, to screen the couple from prying eyes, but really so as to throw a shadowy veil over her face and thus enable her to defy penetration into the workings of her mind. Thus ensconced, with a queenly inclination she motioned her companion to a place beside her, and asked with startling abruptness:

"Now, sir, what is it you would have of Mr. Conrad?"

The question savored considerably of disdainful hauteur.

"She treats me like an overgrown school boy," thought Carleton, instinctively rubbing his callow chin; and, it must be confessed, appearances were

decidedly against our diplomatic neophyte's successful performance of his serious role.

"I cannot hope to inspire you with the same degree of interest I feel in this affair," said he; "yet I may at least make bold to bespeak your sympathy in behalf of an infatuated fellow-creature who, following a whimsical humor of his own, is at last caught floundering in a bog of troubles."

"Say, rather, a star-gazing philosopher dropped into a well," replied the veiled beauty, in the same half scornful tone. "Poor fellow! he has my heartfelt pity. Now for the cause of his sorrows?"

Thus conjured, Carleton rapidly and vividly portrayed the maze of difficulty in which he had become entangled, bringing forward in sharp relief the salient points which he considered most likely to produce an effect upon his fair listener. Never was eloquent *raconteur* rewarded with more flattering attention. Impenetrably serene and still, she heard him through from beginning to end. He could not see her face distinctly, but the gentle heaving of her bosom betrayed no symptom of quickened pulsaton, and no unguarded gesture gave evidence of unusual excitement.

"Strange!" she said musingly, when he was done speaking, with a depth of feeling she had not before evinced. "He never said a word to his nephew of his correspondence with Mr. Buchanan."

"So I conceived at first," said Carleton, adapting his language to her altered mood; "but, on afterthought, his silence does not appear to me in the least degree surprising. He was only solicitous to learn whether his former letter had reached its destination. Warned of his approaching end, it may be

of the suddenness of the summons which awaited him, he sought to divert his mind wholly from worldly distractions, and to draw the curtain of oblivion on the painful past. His few remaining years were spent in preparing for the eternal scene; death was the familiar companion of his daily walks—the theme of his constant meditations. He lived as if the present moment might be the last of earth; and, although he was apparently free from mental disquietude, his soul was all the time paying cruel rack-rent for its battered tenement, and joyfully when the final notice came

> 'Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
> Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind.'"

The melting pathos with which he rendered his brief tribute to the memory of her afflicted cousin went straight to her heart and dissipated every trace of cold reserve. Her manner was unaffectedly cordial and frank as she emerged from the curtained shadow and turned to him in the full-orbed radiance of her glorious beauty, "enough to make a world to doat."

"Many thanks, Mr. Carleton," she said, "for your entertaining story. It has interested me more than I have words to express. I sincerely wish you may be successful in your further researches. By all means I advise you to speak with Mr. Conrad. But, see the dance is over, and Lucy has promised to sing for us in the interlude."

So, after all, the diplomatist took nothing for his pains, though he was more than ever convinced that his fair listener was not a whit the wiser for his revelations.

"Who says a woman cannot keep a secret?" he mentally ejaculated. "Dissemblers by instinct, disguisers by habit, deceivers by intuition, they are masked batteries of deceitful wiles and delusive temptations; 'tis theirs to wheedle and cajole, to lurk in ambush for unwary man, and disarming his suspicions by flattery and blandishments, to shear him of his strength and deliver him over bound with wythes to his adversary. Delilahs all! Bah! what gammon! Man, the tyrant and despot of the sex, is alone responsible for the cajoleries, deceits and crafty recourses of woman. These are their only weapons of warfare, and whether their conduct be censurable or not, depends on the end to be gained."

With these incoherent and contradictory ideas chasing each other through his discomfited brain, he bowed his acknowledgments of her appreciative speech with graceful courtesy, and, resigning their seats to the tired dancers, they mingled with the joyous throng who were flocking around the sweet songstress already seated at the harpischord. She was turning over the leaves of a large new music book—Mr. Copland's present—as the truants approached.

"Come, Mary," she said, "choose a song for me."

But her father's cheery voice anticipated Mary's selection; the whist party had adjourned to hear her sing—"Rax me the beuk, bairn. There is a sang for you. I'se warrant, nane o' them hae heard it."

The enchantress obeyed his command, and presently the touching strains of "Auld Robin Gray"

fell upon the entranced ears of the company in a shower of melodious tears. Everybody was in ecstacies. Even the flinty-hearted "Exciseman," between the music and the punch-bowl, grew rapturously lachrymose, and, forgetting his so-called official dignity, kissed the fair performer on both her blushing cheeks. Other songs were called for in quick succession, and were rendered in a way that, to our taste, was the perfection of music married to immortal verse.

At length the obliging Lucy had to give over from sheer exhaustion of fatigue, and, be it recorded for an example worthy of imitation on like occasions, no importunity could prevail with one of the other less gifted daughters of song there assembled to break the dulcet charm she had woven. We cannot stay to dwell on each delightful feature of this festive scene. A sterner task imperatively claims our attention. In diversions such as we feebly described, interlarded with a profusion of creature comforts, the tide of enjoyment flowed on in an unbroken stream to a late hour of the night. Instead of his national *Tullochgorum*, Mr. Graeme was well content to let young folks and old frisk through the intricacies of the Virginia reel, and when the merry guests took their leave, Lucy had abundant cause for unalloyed satisfaction. Mr. Waddell might come now and welcome.

"Dick," said Carleton, with a sleepy yawn, as they were riding slowly home, "Mary Littleton is, as you say, a beautiful enigma. I have lost the wager."

"I am glad of it," was the consoling reply, and the matter was dropped.

CHAPTER XV.

IT was well nigh day-break when the two friends arrived home from the party at Bonhill. Harry did not wait to be invited, but went straight to bed, and was soon lost to the music of the cock's shrill clarion and echoing horn. Not so Mr. Richard Alloway; he had other business on his hands. It was his rule not to permit the pursuit of pleasure at any time to interfere with the regular routine of his domestic administration. Social indulgences were never by him carried to an excess which unfitted him for the performance of his daily avocations with scrupulous exactitude. So, donning his working-day clothes, he called up the servant, who was sleeping by the fire in the hall, ordered a fresh horse, and sallied forth on his accustomed round. In addition to the ordinary tasks, there was a stalled ox to be slain that morning, an operation which he always superintended in proper person. The first faint streaks of the dawn were glimmering in the east, the air was crisp and frosty, and a soft, feathery mist hovered above the earth,

making the dark wood appear like an enchanted island in the midst of a vapory sea.

"Silent was then the forest bound,
Save the red breast's note and the rustling sound
Of frost-nipped leaves that are dropping around,
Or the deep-mouthed cry of the distant hound
That opens on his game."

What a morning for a fox-hunt, was Alloway's first thought; his next was for a ride, and turning into the road which led through the wood, he gave the rein to his horse, and went dashing along at a pace which soon stirred the sluggish blood into a warm glow. As he came in sight of the main highway, the dim outline of a human form whisked rapidly across the open space in front of him. He saw it only for a second; but there could be no mistaking that burly frame and rolling gait.

"Ship ahoy!" shouted Dick, in a voice which made the leaves rustle and quiver on the trees.

The figure halted suddenly, and was heard panting and blowing like a porpoise.

"Hilloa, ye bloody ould buccaneer, where the divil are ye cruising to this time o' the morning?" was Mr. Alloway's best essay at an Irish salutation, as he rode up to the old sailor.

"Och, Misther Dick," replied Mike, slowly regaining his presence of mind; "and its only yourself to be sure. Bad cess—I mane top o' the mornin' and the blessin' o' St. Patrick to your honor; but you've knocked me down on my bame ends intirely."

"Hulled you at the first shot, and made you

round to in a hurry; rather ticklish for a crazy old ship under a full press of sail, eh? Well, you are my prize, Mike, and I shall see you safe into port. You are the very man I was looking for. So, vast heave; put your helm up or down, any way you please, so you steer a bee-line for Woodbourne house."

While Dick was rattling on in this comical vein, the umquihile Jack-tar was holding fast to both his sides and struggling hard to recover breath sufficient to give utterance to the contending emotions which convulsed his sturdy form and imparted to his countenance a fearful expression, somewhat rueful and exceeding wroth. On the ground at his feet lay a rusty old Brown Bess of a musket, which he eyed vengefully. Dick had not observed him closely before, owing to the dimness of the light.

"Och, the murtherin', thievin' vaggabins, Misther Dick," he at length blurted out, and paused for a fresh start.

"Who, Mike? Why, what on earth is the matter with you?" asked Dick, eagerly; he had never seen the old sailor in such a passion before.

"Matther wid me? Ye may well ask that; an' sure wouldn't it be matther enough if the moradin' villains had run away with your honor's own beautiful boat? By the bones uv my ancestors, it is myself that will be afther purshuin' the dirty blackguards to the ind o' the world, an' my name is not Michael Burke."

"Not afoot and overland, Mike?" said Dick, repressing an inclination to laugh. "Come, tell me

what has happened to put you in such a terrible stew."

Thus entreated, Mike, with many ejaculations of rage and a free use of the choicest epithets his vocabulary of nautical maledictions afforded, related his pitiful story. He could not tell precisely what was the hour, but it was after midnight last gone, that he was awaked by the furious barking of his faithful house-dog, which told as plainly as if the animal had spoken the words that there were thieves about. Jumping out of bed, he ran to the window in time to see a party of strange men making off with his boat, which was kept moored in a small cove at the foot of the garden. To snatch up his gun and rush to the door, all unmindful of the plight he was in, was the work of an instant; but, before he could raise the latch, his wife awoke in a great fright, and, with a loud screech, at one bound precipitated herself upon him and immediately went into violent hysterics. She had taken due advantage of Mike's helpless condition on retiring for the night to give him a piece of her mind, and now she was convinced her long-suffering spouse was meditating summary revenge; so she clung to him like grim death, weeping and praying, and howling and begging for mercy all in a breath. It was a fortunate diversion for the marauders; as by the time Mike had succeeded in assuring "swate Misthress Murchuson" that she was not the object of his murderous thoughts, and to make her understand what was the real cause of alarm, the boat had cleared the mouth of the cove and was safe from pursuit. But Mike had

not been a bold sea-rover for nothing. He watched the "bloody pirates" until they were out of sight, and the water being as smooth as glass and the stars shining brightly, he had no trouble in seeing them, when they had gotten an offing, lay their course for the mouth of the Potomac river. His plan was conceived and put in execution with a celerity and vigor which would have reflected honor on the bold and enterprising commander of the *Endeavor* himself. Shouldering his trusty musket, and giving Mrs. Murchuson a wide berth for fear she might offer to interpose an obstacle to his design, he scudded away under full sail for the neighboring port of entry, where he was sure to find the assistance he needed in carrying his rapidly concocted plan into effect.

"You can count on me for help, heart and hand, old friend," exclaimed Alloway, when the sailor had finished his tale. "Hurry forward and have everything in readiness; I will join you without delay," and, speeding Mike on his way, he hastened homeward.

At the lawn gate he met James, the butler, who was looking for him with a note, which had just that moment been brought by a servant from Clifton. The bearer said his orders were to take it as quickly as possible to Mr. Alloway, and not to tarry for an answer. Dick glanced at the superscription; it was from Mary Littleton. With an exclamation of surprise he hastily opened the letter, and read the following alarming summons:

"Dear Cousin Richard:

"Please come to me as speedily as you can. Something dreadful has happened; I know not what. Don't delay; every moment is as precious as life.

"Your distressed cousin,

"Mary Littleton."

"Good heavens!" thought Alloway, what can be to pay at Clifton?" But there was no time for speculation. His gallantry alone would have prompted immediate obedience to his cousin's command; but, from his knowledge of her firm and courageous temper, he was forced to conclude that this bewildering missive was far from being the inspiration of the ordinary pangs and fears which wars and women are said to have in common.

"James," said he to the servant, "go tell your Uncle William he need not wait for me, and see that Mr. Carleton is not disturbed until I get back. Stay—there is another thing I was near forgetting. Get a horse, and ride as fast as you can on the road to Yeocomico until you overtake Mr. Burke. Tell him not to stop for me; he'll understand. That's all I have to say," he added, seeing the man was hesitating for further orders, and plunging into a nigh path through the wood he proceeded to obey Miss Littleton's mandate at the top of his horse's speed.

The excitement of a night's frolicking is not conducive of sound slumber. Such was Carleton's experience when he found himself wide awake after

having slept an hour or two, little refreshed and the prey of nervous restlessness. His senses were not yet recovered from the giddy whirl of intoxication, and the gay and merry scenes he had just quitted danced before his eyes in a wild phantasmagoria of revelry. One object only was clearly discernible in the ever-shifting maze of fancy, a picture never to be erased from memory—which "seen became a part of sight"—that of the dazzling vision of womanly perfection, the queenly creature who had sat and listened so intently to his strange story, her glorious eyes shining like stars in the dusky twilight sky, and her head resting on one fair hand which pressed back the luxuriant mass of hair she suffered with careless art to float in rich undulations over her neck and shoulders. Beyond the lingering sense of sore chagrin at the failure of his deep-laid scheme to surprise her heart's secret, he did not try to analyze the sensations, very near akin to love, with which she had inspired him. He was convinced by that one interview that the interesting stranger was master of the situation, and he was not the man "to build a fair house on another man's ground."

Finding it utterly vain trying to woo the drowsy god back again, he arose, dressed in haste, and descended to the hall. Seeing nobody stirring about the house, he concluded his host was still a-bed, and that the best thing he could do to while away the time until Alloway made his appearance, was to take another leisurely survey of that charming pleasure ground—the library. This time it is the books which attract his particular regard. Of

these there are a great variety—principally standard works in every department of letters, and many of them exceedingly rare and curious specimens. Mr. John Austin was something of a bibliophile, and, although he did not exactly regard everything as fish which came to his net, he was far from indulging the "hide-bound humor" of a severely censorious judgment in gathering his supplies of mental pabulum. Evidently he thought, with his favorite author, that he could not more safely and with less danger scout into the regions of sin and falsity than by reading all manner of disquisitions, and hearing all manner of reason. The valuable collection was mainly the result of his liberal disposition and untiring industry, but his son had enriched it by the addition of the most recent English and French publications.

What were Carleton's sensations as he gazed wistfully at this rich mine of treasured lore? While at College he had frequently been heard to declare that it was the darling object of his ambition to become a distinguished scholar—to erect an enduring monument of his fame in that congenial field of intellectual enterprise. But another career was marked out for him by the hand of overruling destiny. From blissful academic dreams, he has been rudely awakened by the rush and roar of angry, surging waters. In the vortex of a mighty revolution he must plunge, and, Percy-like, drag up drown'd honor by the locks. Young as he was, he was well fitted to bear an active and shining part in the stirring events of the period. The faculties of some men are developed with amazing precocity.

At an early age, before they have reached the arbitrary limit of parental pupilage, their matchless powers seem to have attained the fullest stature, and they need only the spur of opportunity to call them into vigorous play. Experience is, indeed, indispensable to the complete fruition of genius; it corrects the judgment, informs the understanding, enlarges the heart, and chastens the spirit, inculcating prudence and enforcing the necessity of vigilant self-control. But while it points out the true mark and gives steadiness to the aim, it adds nothing to the strength of the arm that bends the springing bow. That is the jealous boon of the Almighty Giver bestowed for great purposes on the chosen instruments of providential design. To this favored class, the eagles of their kind, belonged Henry Carleton. To a joyous and sanguine temperament, and a ready and sparkling wit, he united a judgment sagacious, ripe and discerning beyond his years, a daring and determined spirit, and a soul which glowed with the vestal fire of sincerely patriotic devotion. With such qualities, it is no wonder that in after years he won the intimate confidence and friendship of the most severely just judge of the motives and conduct of his fellows—"the man who was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." It is true, he does not appear to be directly involved with the train of circumstances which form the ground work of the present narrative; yet we have thought proper to accord him a passing tribute, and to express the hope that his appearance in ever so subordinate a part on our mimic stage may

afford some foreshadowing of the character he displayed in real action.

On this occasion our cavalier seems to be greatly puzzled to find such light diversion as accords with the excited frame of his mind. At length he selects at random a volume of the handsome new edition of Pope, which is a portion of Mr. Richard Austin's latest contributions to the stock of miscellaneous literature. It is all correspondence. There is a folded page on which a passage has been marked with a pencil. He reads it aloud: "Great God! what an incongruous animal man is! How unsettled in his best part, his soul, and how changeable and variable in his frame of body; the constancy of the one shook by every notion, the temperament of the other affected by every blast of wind. What is he altogether but one inconsistency? Sickness and pain are the lot of one-half of him; doubt and fear the portion of the other. What a bustle we make about passing our time, when all our span is but a point. What aims and ambitions are crowded in this little instant of our life which is rounded with a sleep. Our whole extent of being is no more in the eye of Him who gave it than a scarce perceptible moment of duration. Those animals whose circle of being is limited by three or four hours, as the naturalists tell us, are yet as long-lived and possess as wide a scene of action as man, if we consider him with a view to all space and all eternity. Who knows what plots, what achievements a mite may perform in his kingdom of a grain of dust within his life of some minutes, and of how much less consideration than

this is the life of man in the sight of God, who is from ever and forever! Who that thinks in this train but must see the world and its contemptible grandeurs lessen before him at every thought. 'Tis enough to make our brains stupefied in a poize of inaction, void of all desires, of all delights, of all friendships."

Carleton mused: "'Twere a twinge indeed, thought he, could extort such a lugubrious note as this from the sweet swan of Twickenham. He must have been woefully haunted with blue-devils. Could it be imagined that the maudlin creature who vented this nauseating rheum of splenetic humor was the same author who wrote the "Messiah" and the "Essay on Man?" A pitiable world it would be if everybody in it moralized in so desponding and distempered a train. It is a blessed thing that man is an incongruous animal—many sided, many handed, and many minded; if he were not, what a humdrum affair would be the epic of human life? For all the snarling of mangy cynics, he is a most marvellous piece of mechanism, well deserving the eulogy of the divinest of bards—"noble in reason, infinite in faculties, in form and moving, how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!" Such is the light in which he should be taught to regard himself, and without the just pride which is the manifestation of the Divinity which stirs within him, he would be more despicable than the tiniest midge that disports its brief hour in the sunbeam."

"It is to be hoped," he continued, speaking aloud, "that Mr. Richard Austin was not prevailed

upon to swallow such empirical stuff as an antidote for the bane of a miserable life. Dick's a happy fellow; how I envy him his knack of taking the world so easy. Had this peripatetic personage been my uncle, I would not have had a day's peace of mind until I had fully realized the folly of that wisdom which is to be had by prying into forbidden secrets. Call it what you will, childish superstition, idle curiosity—but if this old house belonged to me, it should be made to give up its secret, or else I would blow it up with gunpowder."

"Playing Guy Fawkes, eh?" cried a voice behind him.

CHAPTER XVI.

IT was Alloway who had come hurriedly into the room unperceived. Carleton started at the sudden apparition. "Why, Dick," he exclaimed, "I thought you were all this time fast asleep, and here you are looking as if you had been riding a steeple-chase, and you are as solemn as an owl and as mysterious as the devil. Hang it all! Don't stand there gaping like a moon-calf in a dumb show, but out with it at once. What in the world have you been doing?"

"In a moment, Harry." He went out, gave an order to the servant and returned. "Now," said he, "sit down and let me have your undivided attention. It is a real mystery this time; I sincerely trust it may not lead to a tragical disclosure."

"He is evidently in earnest," thought Carleton, seating himself in the nearest chair, *arrectis auribus.*

"Read that," said Dick, giving him Miss Littleton's note, by way of dramatic prologue.

On perusing it the last shade of incredulity vanished from his brow; he listened eagerly. Briefly

recounting the occurrences we have narrated, Alloway went on to say: "When I arrived at Clifton I found my cousin waiting for me in the parlor. She was very pale, but perfectly composed and self-possessed. It is surprising what wonderful command over their feelings some women have. After thanking me in one earnest word for my promptness, she at once made known the reason of her importunate message. Colonel Littleton and herself were the last of the company to leave Bonhill, she having lingered to speak with Mrs. Graeme. On reaching home, she had barely gone to her room before she heard the furious galloping of a horse, and, as it stopped in front of the door, a voice, which she instantly recognized as Mr. Thompson's, bawled out: 'Littleton, Littleton!' Her father had not quitted the hall, and going quickly to the door exclaimed, as he opened it and caught sight of the collector, 'My God, neighbor, what is the matter with you?' Alarmed, she ran to the window and looked out. There sat old Jake on his horse, a figure to look upon. He was in a state of excitement bordering on phrensy; his features were convulsed with rage, and he was talking and gesticulating at a fearful rate. She could not make out what he was saying, farther than that something was the matter with Archie, and now and then she was convinced that she caught an uncomplimentary allusion to her father's guest. Presently, he wheeled his horse around, and, throwing a parting word over his shoulder, went flying down the avenue with break-neck speed. Hurrying down stairs, she met her father. She had never seen him more agitated and distressed. 'This is a terribly

bad business, my daughter,' he said. 'Thompson's little boy has been spirited away—carried off in the night; two of his hands are reported to be missing, and he himself is as mad as a March hare, for he swears that Mr. Conrad is the cause of it all.' Well nigh fainting with apprehension and alarm—any other woman would have swooned away on the spot—she besought him to tell her how it happened. He replied that he could not get a clear or definite account from the Collector, he raved so incoherently; but, at her earnest entreaty, he very promptly ordered his horse and set out in pursuit of his demented neighbor. When he was gone, her fears increased, and, in her extremity, she sent for me. You remember that fellow we saw yesterday on the river in a skiff?"

Carleton.—"The sailor? Yes, and the boy also."

Alloway.—"The villain was following Archie, and if any harm has befallen the poor lad he is probably the author of it." Here he related the adventure of the oak, with which the reader is familiar.

Carleton.—"No doubt the rascal had a hand in it—very likely the principal; but he must have had help in such a daring undertaking."

Dick.—"Precisely what the Collector said, only he accuses Mr. Conrad of being the prime mover in the scheme of villainy, and that was the greatest source of trouble to my fair cousin, as much as she felt on Archie's account. 'Nothing,' said she, 'could be more absolutely false, not to say preposperous.' I do not know what possessed me, but I started to say something about the suspected party being a stranger, and immediately wished the words

had choked me. 'Stay,' she cried—and you should have seen how the blood rushed into her face and then flowed back upon her heart, leaving her as white as an alabaster figure, while her eyes sparkled and flashed like two great diamonds—'I know what it is you would say. Stranger let him be; but, for the sake of your own dear honor, breathe not a syllable of the unjust suspicion which your looks imply. It is no time for explanations. Still as I have invited this conference in a matter of the most delicate and distressing nature, you have a right to expect my entire confidence shall be given you. In due time you will be fully gratified. For the present it is enough for you to know that he in whose behalf I bespeak your interest is my affianced husband, the peer of the best gentleman in the land.' Jupiter, how splendidly she said that, and how thoroughbred she looked!"

Seeing Carleton smile at this last characteristic simile, he quickly continued, "It was impossible to gainsay this candid declaration. The starch was completely taken out of me. I felt an indescribable thrill of sympathy and admiration, and hastened to assure my lovely cousin that my poor service was entirely at her command. And had she ordered me to bring her the head of the Grand Turk, I should have started, I verily believe, post-haste for Constantinople on horseback."

"*O Dea certe!* What a wonderful metamorphosis the heartless coquette has undergone!" Carleton could not resist the temptation of saying.

"I deserve your ill-timed sarcasm, Harry," said the penitent Richard, "but I beg you will not again interrupt me. As I was saying, I asked her how I

could best aid her in the matter. She replied that Mr. Conrad was now at Yeocomico, whither he went yesterday afternoon on business. He was expected back some time during the morning. Of this her father knew nothing. She wished that I would seek him as speedily as possible, and apprise him of what has happened before that hot-headed old blunderbuss of a tory brings the hue and cry of the country about his ears—a result which would exasperate the high-spirited gentleman beyond endurance, besides being to her mortifying in the extreme. This I readily undertook to do, and seeing that she had glanced repeatedly at the clock and noted every swing of the pendulum, 'one word more,' said I; 'may I take Mr. Carleton with me?' 'As you please,' said she; and off I went like a shot, and here I am, and breakfast is ready, and our horses are at the door. You see, Harry," added Dick, persuasively, "it is a ticklish piece of business, and I shall need your tact to help me through with it."

"Anything to oblige you, Dick," said Carleton; "but I must confess that the salt has lost its savor. Miss Littleton's affianced husband! I'm sped; ''tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide'—say, Dick, why not let the old tory and the Frenchman fight it out *a-la-mort?*"

"Come, Harry," replied his host with dignity; "it is no time for pleasantry. I feel acutely for Mr. Thompson, and do earnestly hope that nothing evil has happened to poor little Archie."

"I stand reproved, Dickon," protested Carleton, "so, *en avant!*"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE morning meal hurriedly partaken, Alloway and Carleton mounted their fleet steeds, and in nowhile gained the summit of the high hill within a mile of the port of entry, from which was a full view of the broad Potomac. The first object which greeted their sight on its placid bosom was the gallant bark *Katrine*, looming upon the horizon like some "huge bird of heavenly plumage fair," every stitch of her canvas being flung out to catch the light breeze. At this stage, the intersection of two roads, they were joined by another horseman, who came thundering along the highway known as the "Neck" road, bloody with spurring, fiery-red with speed.

"Jupiter!" exclaimed Alloway, "if it is not the Collector."

It was indeed Mr. Jacob Thompson, still in a towering rage and looking the incarnation of vengeance and destruction. His clothes, which had not been changed since the party, were scarcely distinguishable in pattern for the mud with which

he was covered from head to foot; his gaunt and burly form trembled with passion, and he shook his clenched hand at the ship, shouting as he did so with the cry of a baffled tiger:

"Gone, by God! the infernal black pirate."

"For Heaven's sake, Mr. Thompson," cried the friends in a breath, "what is the meaning of this pother?"

"O, you marauding scoundrel!" exclaimed the irate old gentleman, taking no notice of the question; "I'll be even with you yet. I'll live to see you hanging like a dog at the yard-arm of your own vessel."

"Who is it?" inquired Dick, eagerly; "surely not Captain Dent?"

"It is Dent, sir," roared the Collector, as if he defied Dick to deny it; "Dent, the deceitful, palavering, kidnapping villain."

Dick.—"Kidnapping! Have they carried Archie off in the vessel?"

Collector.—"Archie is gone, sir; and, what is more, two of my best hands."

"Dunmore's proclamation," chimed in the mischievous Carleton, by way of adding fuel to the flame of the old gentleman's wrath.

"D—n Dunmore!" he exclaimed; "the black-hearted, white-livered poltroon. He ran away at the first gun, and left the like of me to the tender mercies of rebels, thieves and murderers. He will get his deserts when the King hears of these outrages. Haven't you brought the country to a pretty pass among you? No law, no officers, no anything—just a d—d den of savages and wild beasts.

You go and kick up a row because you want to live without paying your taxes to the government you belong to; and this man they call a governor gets scared and sneaks off, and then calls upon the negroes to help him. A pretty way to put down one rebellion by raising a worse; and he never once asks leave of their owners whether they be loyal men or not. He shall be impeached as sure as there is a Parliament sitting in London."

Seeing that the old gentleman was so beside himself with anger that nothing was to be gotten from him but an incoherent tirade of abuse of everybody and everything, Alloway thought to divert the tide of his wrath by saying that Carleton and he were out in search of Mr. Conrad. It was the signal of another explosion.

"Looking for him, are you? Then you may as well turn round and go back home. You'll not see the rascal again in a hurry, I'll be bound. I knew him for a d—d French spy as soon as I set eyes on him; I said as much to Littleton. Eh! Why, there he is now."

It was not Conrad as the friends naturally surmised, but Colonel Littleton, approaching them from the direction of Yeocomico. As he rode up his greeting was constrained and embarrassed, and although he tried hard to master his emotion, perplexity and chagrin were plainly visible in his face.

"You are early abroad after the frolic last night, young gentlemen," said he to Alloway and Carleton, and then, as the former was about to reply, turning quickly to Mr. Thompson, he continued, "Come, neighbor, it's no use tarrying here; I'll see you home."

The Collector gave a vengeful glance at the *Katrine*. She had by this time rounded Smith's Point, and was standing down the bay. Then, without a word, he accepted Colonel Littleton's proposal, and they rode away together. Recovering from his surprise, Alloway called to Colonel Littleton to inquire whether he had seen or heard aught of Mr. Conrad in his ride.

"He's gone!" replied the 'Squire, sharply and without turning his head.

The young cavaliers sat regarding each other in blank astonishment.

"Well, Harry," said Dick, drawing in a deep breath, and emitting it in a most musical, most melancholy whistle, "what's to be done now?"

Even the quick-witted Carleton was for once dumbfounded. "Would it were bed-time and all were well," he was in the act of saying, when he was interrupted by a hoarse voice calling: "O, Mr. Richard, I certainly am glad to see you," and at the same moment an old man, dressed like a fisherman, shambled out of a thicket near the road and stood before them. He stuck the paddle, which he carried on his shoulder, in the ground, and leant on it with both hands.

"Good morning, Mr. Bragg," said Dick; "you seem tired."

"An' well I mought be," replied the fisherman; "I have walked every blessed step of the way from my house, as hard as I could put foot to the ground, with this here letter for Mr. Graum, which it was sent to him by a gentleman on board of the vessel, and he told me to be sure he got it

betimes this morning. Now, Mr. Richard, if you be going soon—,"

"I can save you the rest of the journey? Certainly," replied Alloway, taking the letter from the old man's hand; "so you saw the *Katrine* off?"

Bragg.—"Yes, sir; I was 'long side of her when she weighed anchor. You see, the Captain wanted me to bring him some oysters."

Dick.—"Had she many passengers?"

Bragg.—"I can't speak for certain about that. I didn't see nobody but the Scotch gentleman as give me the letter. There was two niggers in a big boat beggin' and entreatin' of the Captain in the pitifullest manner to take 'em on board; but he told 'em to go back home and give his respecks to their master and tell him he wasn't in the nigger kidnappin' business at this pertickler time. While they was a chaffin, I seen another big boat come out of the creek. Soon as ever them darkies got sight of her they 'peared to know eggzactly what was to pay, for they let go the painter and shot for shore 'way up the river. Then come the chase,—"

"Thank you, Mr. Bragg, that's all I wish to know," said Dick, preparing to go.

"Hold on one second, Mr. Richard," said the fisherman; "what *is* the matter with Mr. Thompson? He come straining by me like he wan't caring if he killed his horse or broke his own neck."

"They were his negroes who were running away," replied Alloway, and commending the loquacious fisherman to a more appreciative audience, he and

Carleton were off again on the wings of the wind. They separated at the road leading to Woodbourne, Alloway proceeding directly to Bonhill.

The day was now far spent; Mr. Graeme was not long returned from his usual ride. Discarding ceremony, the young man rushed into his presence and, thrusting the letter into his hand, exclaimed: "For Heaven's sake, Mr. Graeme, tell me quickly what news is in it."

The good gentleman stared at his excited neighbor as if he thought he had surely *"gane gyte;"* but he was so completely knocked off his balance as to be incapable of resenting the indecorous proceeding. Hastily breaking the seal, he ran his eye over the letter in search of the explanation of this ungracious intrusion on his privacy. Suddenly his manner changed; he became fearfully agitated, and his countenance betrayed a variety of indescribable emotions. Recovering his habitual self-control by a strong effort, he slowly and attentively reperused the letter, and, having done so, remained some minutes in deep thought. Then he rose from his chair, and, turning to Alloway, said in a calm and decided tone: "Bide here a time, Richard, lad; aiblins ye might wish to speak a word wi' Lucy; but ye maunna be ganging hame before my return frae Clifton;" and before his visitor could utter a word in reply, he snatched up his hat and cane and left the room. In the hall he met his daughter, to whom he communicated something in a low, earnest tone, and ere another hour elapses, he is seen in close conference with Mary Littleton and her father.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THOROUGHLY worn down by the day's rough work, Carleton as soon as he reached Woodbourne threw himself to rest on the settle in the library. "Well," said he, "this beats cock-fighting out of sight, as Bob Temple would say, and fox-hunting, too, from the way my limbs ache; just enough of the flavor of villainy to give it relish. What can that rascally skipper be up to? Mary Littleton's fiancée has decamped, too; the old, sorrowful story; it's a sad business; yet, what's the loss of one lover to a girl who has a pack of them that will come at her whistle? Who knows that it may not yet be my turn? Psha! I verily believe I am getting to be as big a ninny as the rest of them. *Amour tu perdis Troie!* A deep saying that of the divine Pascal; there's indeed no guessing what would have happened to the human family had Madam Cleopatra's nose been a little shorter. Heigh ho! This is excellent sport for the piping times of peace; but it is not the way to purge these English hence. Shame upon the whole tribe of lusty young fel-

lows, myself among the number, to be dancing attendance here on a pair of black or blue eyes, or else galloping over the country after hounds and horn, when they should be in the trenches at Boston with muskets in their hands. But Rome was not built in a day; neither can a cavalry company be recruited and equipped for service in the twinkling of an eye. I have gained one important point. Alloway has engaged to help me, and he is a tower of strength. I have always entertained a warm regard for Dick's amiable qualities, but I had no conception before of the amount of good, stern stuff that was in him. Bold, alert, sharp-sighted and strong-limbed, he is a born stark trooper. I wish I had a hundred just like him enlisted for the war and determined to fight to the bitter end." With which patriotic aspiration his soliloquy ended, and another minute he was fast locked in the embrace of the drowsy god.

He had been scarcely an hour asleep before he was awakened by the entrance of a visitor. It was the young lawyer. He, too, showed evident signs of having been considerably jostled from his usual placid and sedate demeanor.

"All alone, Harry?" he exclaimed, barely giving Carleton time to say good morning. "Where's Alloway? What's all the muss about? The whole country is up in arms, but devil a soul can tell what it means. Dick, they say, is in the secret; where can I find him?"

Here James, who had ushered in Mr. Copland, explained the cause of his master's detention at Bonhill.

"But he must have told you everything, Harry; that's the next best evidence. Tell me, now, the exact truth of the matter; I have had enough of Temple's palaver."

"What I know is soon told," replied Carleton. "It seems that this Captain Dent, with what motive is beyond conjecture, has abducted old Mr. Thompson's foster-son, and it is moreover surmised by some people that a certain foreign adventurer, in whom a lady acquaintance of ours is said to be interested, had a hand in the nefarious transaction."

Copland.—"The Frenchman? Why, Bob Temple just now informed me that he and Miss Littleton were engaged to be married."

Harry.—"The tattling coxcomb! What does he know about it?"

Copland.—"Next to nothing, I am well satisfied, and therefore I shall have to call a more reliable and better informed witness. Come to the book, Harry. I must have the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth concerning that little tête-à-tête last night."

Evidently Carleton was not in a humor to relish his friend's bantering tone. He had suddenly lapsed into gravity. "No offence, Charley," he said, "but I must insist on dropping the subject; it sounds so unfeeling—our jesting—considering the turn things have taken. What you have heard is very true; they are betrothed. Dick Alloway had the assurance from Miss Littleton's own lips this morning. Why he went away on the vessel I cannot divine; but of one thing I have no manner of doubt—he is not implicated in the kidnapping affair."

Copland.—"It is a pretty case, Harry, and my professional acumen is greatly piqued; but since you wish it, I will forego the examination for the present. Gone, eh? taken French leave! What was the tune we were dancing to last night? 'Malbrook has gone to the wars.' A thousand pardons, Harry; what was you going to say?"

Harry.—"Having dismissed that disagreeable topic, tell me what is the news abroad. I did not have a chance to question you at the party last night."

Copland.—"My intelligence is summed up in one word—war; they mean to lick us into terms if they can. Such is the pronounced purpose of the Ministry, and the body of the people applaud it. During my three years' stay in London I was a close observer, and read with care the real expositors of public sentiment. The secret of Lord Chatham's popularity and influence lay in the unexampled success of his war policy, conducted as it was with such wonderful spirit and energy. The results added immensely to the British possessions, and placed the nation on the pinnacle of power and greatness. The land resounded with the *Io Triomphe* of the Great Commoner, the people's idol, a very god,—and what was of more importance to us, the sincere friend of America, inflexibly opposed to every scheme tending to subject us to unrighteous burthens. The jubilee over, the day for auditing arrives—the remorseless piper presents his bill. Lo, the budget foots up the enormous sum of £140,000,000—the whole of it spent by Lord Chatham in his glorious campaigns. He is naturally looked to for suggesting the way to pay it; but

he is no financier; such drudgery is beneath the notice of a great statesman; he turns the business over to his brother-in-law, Granville. That minister tries the old-fashioned plan. New duties, imposts and excises are the order of the day. The country is in a ferment of indignation; the cities grow riotous, and Ciderland, especially, is ready to raise the standard of open rebellion. In despair, ministers resort to the colonies for help. These, they say, have been the sole gainers by the war, have been saved from the tender mercies of tomahawk and scalping-knife by British valor; they must foot the bill. The colonies flare up, and their attitude creates alarm among the merchant princes of London, Liverpool and Bristol. Granville points to the war-budget of his predecessor, and demands to know where he is to get money to meet the deficit in the treasury. Pitt retorts with a humorous sally, but the 'Gentle Shepherd' is not so easily laughed out of court. He reiterates the significant question, and sober business men realize its grave importance. It is plain to them that every source of legitimate revenue must be tapped or the credit of the nation will be irretrievably damaged. Thus the question of the right to tax the colonies became the one absorbing theme of parliamentary debate and popular agitation. In proportion to our earnestness in protesting against the outrage, did public opinion in England manifest itself in favor of the King's determination to make the experiment, and now the nation as a whole is, in my judgment, fully prepared to support the most vigorous measures the administration may devise for our subjugation. You

can't imagine how contemptuously they speak of us. I was mad enough to fight a hundred times before I left London, but managed to keep my temper from getting the better of my discretion."

Harry.—"What you say corroborates Mr. Arthur Lee's opinion in a recent letter to my father. Well, I, for one, do not regret the course events have taken. With my good old preceptor, Dr. Witherspoon, I believe the people of America are not only ripe for independence but rotting. It is too late now for the government to retrace its steps. Our terms have risen since the guns opened on Boston. We can be satisfied with nothing less than the unequivocal renunciation of the right to tax us against our consent, and guaranteeing to us by irrepealable grants local home government, involving the retrenchment of the executive functions of vice-regents, and an increase of legislative authority in the provincial assemblies. In a word, we must have all and singular the privileges, immunities and franchises of English subjects. These they are not likely to give, and the end is foreseen. To your tents, O Israel!"

Copland.—"Why, Harry, you are an improved edition of Nat Bacon."

Harry (enthusiastically).—"You could not pay me a dearer compliment. Bacon fired the first gun for American liberty; may it be my glorious privilege to shoot the last mother's son of its enemies."

Copland (professional caution could not stand before the fiery zeal of his companion).—"You are a trump, Harry," he warmly replied. "Still I cannot help wishing the crisis had been put off until I

had finished the round of the inns of courts. However, that's no great matter; this revolution, if it succeeds, will make many sweeping changes in the principles and practices of the common law, and I may have to unlearn half I know at present. But who have we here?"

It was another visitor come to learn the exact particulars of that astounding outrage. Soon another and another arrived in breathlesss haste. The exciting news had flown far and wide over the country; the untiring "postman" was in his element, doing yeoman service and sending the intelligence with lightning speed in every direction. Gathering volume as it passed from mouth to mouth, it at last swelled into the most extravagant dimensions, past all whooping, and rumor after rumor of the most absurd description glided swimmingly along on the top wave of popular credulity to the remotest corner of the colony.

In no while Carleton found himself to be the cynosure of quite an imposing assembly of indignant young patriots, who were unanimously agreed that it was high time to put a stop to such high-handed and lawless proceedings. He improved the occasion to harangue them on the abominations of tyranny in general, and the grievous oppressions of British rule in particular. The fruits of his glowing phillippic were a round dozen able-bodied volunteer recruits for the horse company.

It was after candle-light when Alloway returned; the company were all gone, and Carleton was again alone. His host was whistling as he entered, a signal which foreboded other strange developments.

"Here you are at last!" cried Carleton, "charged to the muzzle with inscrutable wisdom, to judge from your looks. Come, out with it; I am heartily disgusted with this everlasting game of blind-man's buff."

"Blind-man's buff with a vengeance!" replied Dick, dropping into a chair and stretching his limbs with an air of intense weariness. "Throw me the slippers there in the corner. What a relief to get rid of these plaguey hard boots; now I am comfortable. Well, Harry, we are at a dead fault; the trail is as cold as a wedge—lost beyond recovery;" and, to give emphasis to the startling announcement, he stared hard at his friend with a visage that was comically blank and rueful.

Bewildered as he was, Carleton could not help laughing. "Lost!" he repeated; "where? in Mr. Graeme's punch-bowl?"

"In Chesapeake bay," replied Dick, with unmoved countenance; "the pirate has captured your mighty hero, and away goes your little romance. If I was not so sleepy, I would a tale unfold—"

Harry.—"Not a wink of sleep shall you have until you tell me what you know;" and suiting the action to the word, he locked the door of the room and put the key in his pocket.

Dick.—"And shall I not take mine ease in mine inn, Hal?"

Harry.—"When you have done with your provoking tomfoolery, not before. Come, sir, the story, the story!"

Dick.—"Sheath your impatience, Hal. Will not a song do as well? Captain Kidd, you know—

"'And he sailed and he sailed—'"

Harry.—"I verily believe you are tipsy in good earnest. Your conduct is outrageous. Here I have been the best part of the day—(Dick, *sotto voce*, 'As dry as a powder-horn,')—entertaining a score or more of your friends and neighbors while you have been—"

Dick.—"In better company. Well, insatiable newsmonger, sit down and hearken to my tale, and much may it enlighten you."

But highly as we respect Mr. Richard Alloway's powers of narration, we prefer to tell the story in our own way, and in our own good time.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN the Christian calendar, the Sabbath is the first day of the week. Of old, it was the seventh and last day which the Almighty Maker hallowed and blessed for His own. By the change it became doubly sanctified, celebrating the victory over death and the grave, and forever typical of the rest which is prepared for the saints in heaven.

It cannot be denied that very loose notions at this time prevailed in Virginia as to the due observance of the Lord's day, but with the exception of that phase of profanity more or less common to every age and country since the Christian era began, the people were duly regardful of everything that pertained to the sanctity of religious institutions.

It was Sunday, the last day of Carleton's proposed sojourn at Woodbourne, and, judging from the signs of the weather, it was the last, too, of that delightful interlude of the seasons which, in this latitude, goes by the name of the Indian Summer. The wind was blowing great guns from the northwest; cloudy

racks went skurrying across the welkin's face, darkening the sun and shooting cold lances through shivering lights and livers, and the leaves of the forest were falling thick and fast under the savage flail of the tempest. Harry was sitting at the window watching the limbs of the great oak on the lawn, as they swayed to and fro in the gale.

"I am thinking there will be a slim attendance at church this blustering morning," said he, turning to Dick, who had just come in and was toasting his shins by the fire.

"Never you fear for that," replied his friend. "Between curiosity to hear the 'new-light' preacher, and the desire to talk over yesterday's doings, they won't mind the weather if the wind does blow. Ugh! but it's a nipper nevertheless, right from the North Pole."

Harry.—"It will be as great a treat to me as to the rest of the benighted heathen hereabouts. I haven't heard a good rousing sermon since I left Nassau Hall. Mr. Waddell is said to be a man of extraordinary parts; he'll be sure to stir things up from the bottom. You will catch it, you miserable sinner."

Dick.—"For what, more than the rest of you?"

Harry.—"Why, for your two notoriously besetting sins—horse-racing and fox-hunting."

Dick.—"If that's all, let it blow till it crack. I do certainly love a fine horse, and can boast of the fastest to be found in the four counties. As for fox-hunting, I freely confess that I am somewhat addicted to the good old gentlemanly pastime which has come down to us from remotest an-

tiquity, and which, by the bye, was especially honored by your mighty hero, Harry the Fifth of England."

Harry.—"I never heard before that he was so passionately fond of the chase. Where did you get your information?"

Dick.—"Not from Shakespeare! Still it is a historical fact. Why, did you never read the story of his coming one day to see his darling Kate in Paris with a fox-tail stuck in his helmet in place of a plume? What did that signify, I should like to know?"

Harry.—"Rightly interpreted, it meant that he had won the brush—that is to say, the wife and her rich dowry of lands, chattels and hereditaments."

Dick.—"Anyhow, it was a royal recognition of the glorious sport which has always been the pride and delight of free-born Britons. The preachers had as well be done canting about the cruelty of it. What were birds and beasts of prey—dogs and men included—made for but to exterminate pestiferous vermin and keep the world from being overrun by vegetarians and herbivorists? It is ridiculous, past endurance to hear one of these sleek parsons, whose paunch is with 'good, fat capon lined,' and whose life is one happy dream of green goose and chicken-pie, railing at the barbarous custom of destroying the poor innocent foxes."

Harry (laughing).—"You are perfectly incorrigible, Dick. You wouldn't dare to make that speech in Mr. Graeme's hearing."

Dick—"Why not? The old gentleman is as keen a sportsman as any of us. You would be charmed to hear him describe his famous badger-hunts when he was a pranksome lad in Scotland. But it's time we were getting ready for church."

In the midst of what was once a magnificent grove of oaks and hickories, cedars and poplars, hard by a spring of the purest and coolest water that ever refreshed the thirst of man and beast, rises a venerable pile dedicated long years ago by Christian prayers to the worship of the living God. The date is on the wall. It was built A. D. 1706, of bricks, they say, brought all the way from England, hard enough when they came out of their native kiln, but so much the harder for their sea-change as to defy the ravages of old Edax Tempus. It is in much better preservation than many similar edifices in Virginia of much later date of erection, and has undergone occasional repairs and alterations from time to time. Some of these betterments had better been left off, in our opinion. A new roof was indispensably necessary; but, alas, the sacreligious genius of modern improvement has gone inside and ransacked and disfigured at such a tasteful rate that the original architect would not be able to recognize his goodly handiwork. Especially do we miss from its place the quaint old-fashioned pulpit, with its overhanging sounding-board, which, in the wantonness of juvenile fancy, we expected to see come down like a well-fitting lid and imprison the Rev. Thumbtext in a living tomb. Mayhap the dread of such a catastrophe led to its removal. Outside everything speaks of ruin

and decay. The wall, which enclosed a space of two acres, in the centre of which stands the church, has crumbled to the earth in a dozen places; the vestry-room is a dismantled wreck, fragments of broken tombstones are strewn around, and the frequent yawning hollows within the pale remind the passenger how soon he may be the prey of dumb forgetfulness. The old church has seen strange sights in its day, and experienced a variety of uses little dreamed of by its pious founders. In the war of 1812, as many living witnesses can testify, it furnished commodious quarters for a squad of valorous militiamen, charged with the duty of watching the enemy's war vessels, which were constantly running in and out of the river and sending their barges ashore to set fire to houses and hay-stacks. They performed their part like veterans, if we are to believe the stories of their prowess related by a surviving member; on one occasion actually marching ten miles in a single night, and reaching their destination in time to cook their breakfast by the smoldering embers of a once proud mansion, and to fire a volley—of oaths—at the hindmost sloop-of-war now hull-down on the horizon. Then it became by day a schoolhouse, where young ideas were trained to such expertness in throwing stones as not to leave a whole pane of glass in the large mullioned windows; and at night it served as a grateful couching-place for beasts of the field, as well as a favorite roosting-place for birds of evil omen. At another time, within our memory, it was the debatable border land of two fiercely contending religious clans, who well

nigh came from words to blows in disputing their mutual claims to rightful possession. And, lastly, in the height of the late terrific contest between the States it was again converted into a barracks for the accommodation of a choice band of self-sacrificing heroes of the last ditch, who generously forewent their share of the splendid laurels which bloom on the perilous ridges of battle and beside the paths of crimson glory, and were humbly content with the meaner sort that grew in the neighboring morass, in which they found at once the modest recompense of a soldier's reward and a secure hiding-place from the insolent foe. Away with mawkish whimpering and sentimental cant! What is yonder ancient pile of brick and mortar but the rude work of profane human hands, and as for those mournful relics of the forgotten dead, why, if every grave were covered with a stone the surface of the earth would in no while become one vast tessellated pavement of lying epitaphs. The moral is plainly written: You must do something more than "building churches," if you would not have your name buried in the tomb of oblivion by the next unvenerating generation.

Mr. Richard Alloway prognosticated rightly; there was a large concourse of people of both sexes and all sizes, and of different complexions of color and creed, to hear the word expounded by that interloping schismatic, as he was obstinately denounced by the most bigoted churchmen. The ill-natured sneers at the Presbyterian preacher's expense only the more inflamed the popular heart, which was now thoroughly imbued with the sentiment of re-

ligious toleration. The services had not begun when our friends arrived; it yet lacked some minutes of the appointed hour, and the minister had not made his appearance. The greater part of the male portion of the congregation, sheltered from the blast under the lee of the church, were exchanging neighborly greetings and descanting upon current news, prominently the exciting occurrences of the previous day. Presently there is a cautionary whisper; the conversation ceases, and all eyes are turned upon the tall, spare, clerical-looking gentleman who, conducted by Lucy Graeme, walks quickly across the yard to the side entrance of the church, receiving, as he passed, the respectful salutations of the assembly, which he acknowledged with graceful, dignified courtesy. A murmur of approbation betokened the favorable impression his looks and carriage had produced, as following his example, the crowd poured into the church until it was filled to its utmost capacity. Never before or since was there such another gathering within those sacred walls. Our description is taken from a letter in the family archives, which says that the audience were "literally jammed, crammed and packed like herrings in a barrel,"—the writer, a bouncing damsel of fifteen, having sat through the entire services on her father's knee. Yet, despite the discomfort, the most perfect quiet and decorum reigned, and from beginning to end the preacher had their undivided attention.

Mr. Waddell's sermon was appropriate to the existing state of public affairs; his text being the tenth verse of the seventh Psalm of David. The

one great leading proposition was presented in a compact, logical arrangement of convincing arguments, and enforced by the breathed spell of genuine, unaffected eloquence. The people of America had invoked the help of the God of battles as their only strength and rock of defence. On one condition only could they expect to obtain the deliverance for which they prayed from Him who "judgeth the righteous and is angry with the wicked every day." The discourse, so unlike in matter, style and mode of delivery to any which had ever before emanated from that pulpit, produced a profound and lasting impression on the vast congregation, and good Mr. John Graeme, overjoyed to see how much his neighbors were affected by the "halesame screed," could not have been more happy had the sweet bells of Saint Mungo been chiming in his ears. It was matter of becoming pride and gratulation to his dying day, that memorable visitation of grace, as he was wont to call it. The sermon was such as might have been expected from the wonderful preacher then in the vigorous prime of manhood, who, long years afterwards, grown feeble with age, palsied, sightless, yet all, more inwardly illumined with celestial light, extorted a glowing tribute from one who knew himself how to touch with a master's hand the chords of human thought, passion and feeling. The services were concluded by a fervent appeal to the Lord of Hosts that He would sustain and cheer the hearts and nerve the arms of the people in the struggle which was before them, and speedily guide them by the path of victory to peace and freedom. The people went

away pondering deeply on what they had heard, and even 'Squire Littleton was constrained to acknowledge that the "new-light" doctrines were in the main sound and scriptural, albeit there was no good word spoken in behalf of his persecuted saints, the blessed Stuarts.

It was observed that Mary Littleton did not come to church. Lucy explained her absence in a whisper to Dick Alloway; she had remained at Bonhill to bear Mrs. Graeme company. As the congregation were dispersing Mr. Graeme drew his young neighbor one side, and imparted to him a piece of news which astonished him to an extraordinary degree. He gave one prolonged whistle, and then suddenly remembering where he was as he met Lucy's surprised look, he blushed to the roots of his hair, clumsily fastened the carriage door on the skirt of the old gentleman's coat, and went to seek his horse in utter bewilderment and confusion.

"Wonders will never cease, Harry," he exclaimed when they were gotten clear of the crowd; "Mike Burke has disappeared; gone in the night, the Lord knows where."

"The mischief!" replied Harry, with an incredulous stare. "How did you learn that?"

"From Mr. Graeme, who had it directly from the sailor's wife," said Dick. "He stole away in his boat under the cover of darkness without a word of warning, and left no clew to his intentions save a piece of plank stuck endwise in the sand, on which he had sketched with charcoal the picture of a ship under full sail with a small boat following in her wake."

"Which means plain enough that Mike has deserted to the enemy," said Harry. "He'll have a lively time cruising after the *Katrine* in this weather. Well, it can't be helped, and really I don't see why you should be so much troubled about it in one way or the other. Your jolly old sea-dog has as much right as anybody else to choose sides in the fight; and having once served with credit in his Majesty's navy, he has only gone back to his first love. That's my solution of the matter, leaving out of view the probability of domestic provocations too grievous to be borne."

"He was well posted about the vessel's movements," Dick went on to say. "She did not put directly to sea as we supposed, but will run into the Rappahannock to complete her cargo, touching at Hobb's Hole and Merry Point; Mr. Osborn, on winding up his affairs here, having exchanged his negroes with Col. James Gordon, of Lancaster, for tobacco. The rascal could easily intercept her with a fair wind. Conrad and Archie out of their clutches, I wish they were at the bottom of the ocean."

Harry made no reply to this wrathful explosion; it was plain that Dick was in no mood for trifling. He was both deeply mortified and sorely distressed. Mike's shameful flight was the unkindest cut of all; it was the culmination of black ingratitude.

END OF PART I.

PART II.

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WOODBOURNE.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE precise day or year is not material to remember, but it was within half a century after the landing of Governor Calvert's select company of immigrants at St. Mary's, that the Manor House of D—— rose majestic from its builder's hand amid the boundless expanse of dim primeval woods, whose sounding aisles for the first time rung to the music of the pioneer's axe. A bright pearl of civilization it was set in the dusky brow of rugged barbarism. Soon other sparkling gems appeared, clustering in dazzling array around that jewel of price, until the lovely province was decorated with a diadem of rarest beauty, and stood forth to the admiring gaze of the world a very queen of unrivalled hospitality. Many a changeful year has fled, and the stately mansion still rears its head proudly aloft—a vener-

able relic of a bygone age, rich in stori d memories, and eloquent of the prophetic warnings of the philosophic sage whose wisdom was nurtured in the bosom of its halcyon repose. Long may it continue to resist the tooth of time and razure of oblivion.

On the evening of the identical day our story begins, two gentlemen were walking slowly backwards and forwards under the leafless elm trees on the great lawn at D—— Manor. The one who is now speaking we would ordinarily put down without hesitation to be verging close on the meridian of life, did we not happen to know that his years were graciously prolonged a full score beyond the allotted span of mortality. In stature he is tall, slim and erect; his manner is remarkably grave and thoughtful, yet free and unembarrassed; and his delicate and refined countenance wears a habitual expression, which is indicative of acute sensibility, nervous energy and inflexible decision. He is plainly attired in homespun habiliments, and altogether his dress betrays the inimitable *simplex munditiis* of unmistakable gentility, being characterized by the scrupulous neatness and faultless taste which, whatever the style or quality of the apparel, proclaims the wearer to be a man of education and refinement. His utterance is rapid and earnest, though he never once gesticulates with his hands, which are crossed behind his back, and keeps his eyes steadily upon the ground, except when he gives an occasional glance at his companion for approval of some remark of unusual interest.

Although the other person is not arrayed in the complete vestments of any particular clerical order,

his carriage as well as his garb sufficiently denotes his priestly calling. His strong, square and massive frame, somewhat disfigured by an awkward stoop of the shoulders, is surmounted by a head such as Raphael or Leonardo di Vinci would have delighted to transfer to canvass; age had touched him with a kind and gentle hand; his lofty and expansive brow was smooth and unwrinkled, and there was about him a pervading atmosphere of mild dignity and cheerful benevolence. Him we introduce as a personage whose eminent worth it is our grateful privilege to celebrate—the pious and learned Abbé Julian Soulé, and the younger gentleman to whom he is listening with such deferential and pleased attention, is, as the intelligent reader has rightly surmised, the munificent and courtly proprietor of that vast patrimonial demesne—the illustrious Charles Carroll of Carrollton. As they are engaged in discussing a subject in which not only that generation but *nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis* are vitally interested, we take the liberty of recording their conversation for the benefit of whom it may concern.

"I have informed your reverence," said Mr. Carroll, "of the purport of Mr. Carleton's latest communication. It fully confirms the views you have expressed as the deliberate result of your own brief but penetrating observation. You have discovered the exact posture of affairs. Virginia is now fully prepared to move in the matter, and the others, rest assured, will not hesitate to follow her lead. My friend Graves will soon see it was in no spirit of bravado that I wrote him that the bayonet was

the only solution of the difficulties between Great Britain and her colonies, and that in appealing to the dread arbiter, we were resolved, at whatever cost of blood and treasure, to be a free and independent people. And now comes the momentous question, when our independence is assured, as it undoubtedly will be, what shall we do to preserve and perpetuate its blessings? Already I feel the strong undertow of popular feeling and sentiment which is bearing us irresistibly away from the ancient landmarks, forms and precedents, which have heretofore been in our eyes the guides and tests of political orthodoxy. We shall soon be adrift on the tempestuous sea of experiment, and who will be our pilot in so great extremity of peril? I have pondered the subject long and anxiously, and have carefully compared opinions with the most prominent and influential citizens of other States. There is little variance among them concerning the proposed new system of government; but a motley multitude of discrepancies and incongruities appear when they come to discuss essential matters of detail. Some honest folks are possessed with such extreme horror of tyranny that if they had their way they would reduce government to the merest shadow of authority, while others are so infatuated with liberty and equality that they seem recklessly disposed to carry the majority rule to the excess of folly and madness. In my judgment, property should be, under all circumstances and at all times, the main care of the law-giver. Life and liberty are in little danger of molestation in a community where every man is free to pursue his chosen path

to happiness, and where all are alike amenable to punitive justice. To protect the garners of industry and the acquisitions of labor and skill, and to guard the sacred domain of virtue and intelligence from the rapacity and profanation of the many-headed monster, as well as to prevent the concentration of power in privileged hands, and the formation of those insidious combinations of cupidity and craft by which the few are aggrandized at the expense of the many, should be the prime end and aim of every well-ordered society. Theories of free government are as plenty as blackberries, but imposing declarations of natural rights, formularies of abstract principles, concatenations of self-evident propositions, sage aphorisms and pithy maxims culled from Plato and Aristotle, from Sydney and Locke, only serve for the themes of ephemeral essays and sophomoric declamation, fit to exercise the various talents of ingenuous youth at college. It is the highest wisdom to know how to adjust the nice balance of constitutional government, and to affix the boundaries of each order and degree in the social scale, and to ascertain what amount of individual right is compatible with the sacredness of property and the security of the commonwealth. Equality before the law, we have been told since Solon's time, is the corner-stone of the structure of popular free government; certainly it is the golden rule of even-handed justice. But from the examples we have already had of its practical enforcement, we may well exclaim, *Nihil est tam inequale quam equalitas ipsa!* Who shall ordain the law? Who give it the awful sanction of omnipotent

authority? Who shall be responsible for its impartial execution? The State—the body civil and politic, the social organism, of whom shall it be composed? Of what materials shall the fabric of regulated republican liberty be built, and on what foundations shall it rest in order that it may not only appear fair and comely in all its proportions, but be strong and durable, capable of resisting the rudest shocks of domestic violence and foreign aggression? Are we destined to behold the soul-informed body and express image of the greatest of temporal blessings, or is the darling object of our desires, after all, but the philosopher's stone, and we a miserable set of deluded alchemists? These questions are not the idle babblings of unprofitable speculation; they furnish food for anxious rumination to the wisest and best men in our land. On the solution of the problem, they suggest hang the vast concerns of a nation's eternal weal or woe. With the light of experience to guide us, we may have no difficulty in finding the pathway to national freedom and glory; the trouble will be how to keep it, and this is the point on which the history of the human race does not throw the light of encouraging hope. After all, the French philosopher may be in the right; democracy may do well enough for *un peuple des dieux*, it is too perfect for men. Pardon my tiresome effusion, but I am speaking out of the abundance of my heart, which is as full of the subject as an egg is of meat."

"And I," replied Father Soulé, "have been weighing seriously every word you have spoken. It is,

indeed, as you say, my son, a mighty theme, pregnant with momentous consequences to the whole human race. In this movement, the great problem which has exercised the talents and prompted the prayers of good men in every age, is destined to find a solution. My faith in the ultimate success of your experiment is unbounded. The Jehovah Himself will be your guide and shield in the dark night on the stormy main; He, in His own good time, will conduct you safely to the haven of peace and joy. My whole life has been devoted to watching the tide of political events in the Old World. I have seen and felt with poignant sorrow the incurable wrongs, the unmixed evils, the appalling calamities of despotic misrule. During the whole of the last adulterous reign, the throne of France was the seat of scorning and blasphemy. Atheism and infidelity usurped every place of power, and poisoned and polluted every well-spring of thought. The people were taught to regard the religion of Christ as a sacerdotal imposture, to revile its ministers, and to scoff at the mention of death and the judgment. Life was a merry-go-round of passion and lust; eternity *un grand peut-etre.* The contagion spread from palace and court to hamlet and hovel. The entire nation was a feculent mass of moral putrefaction. War and famine had done their work of desolation and impoverishment, and now pestilence is there—the terrible spotted leprosy which betokens speedy dissolution. But that wretched kingdom is not alone in its sufferings. For centuries all Europe has been the theatre of cruel and devastating wars between despots. The deep-rooted

disease of society there can never be cured until the seeds are extirpated by the sharp knife and burning cautery of revolution—frightful alternative! The struggle cannot be much longer delayed. The embattled hosts of legitimacy and popular rights confront each other in fierce array, awaiting the signal of deadly combat. Your contest is only the beginning of the end. But it is natural you should confine your thoughts to the stirring scenes which immediately surround you, and to the stern duties which the crisis imposes upon you and your compatriots. It is for sagacious and temperate statesmen like yourself to define with accuracy the plan of the grand structure of representative government; for me, I devoutly pray that my days may be spared to behold the coveted boon of liberty wrested from the grasp of the spoiler, and all Christendom hailing the glorious achievement with acclamations of delight."

The good priest spoke in his native tongue, with a voice which Massillon might have envied—at once full, clear and mellifluous. Seeing his companion to be listening with evident satisfaction, he resumed his discourse.

"There is always danger of the intemperate zeal for popular rights being carried to extravagant lengths; and every effort should be made in your case to keep the wild flood confined in proper bounds. You should never for an instant lose sight of the great fundamental precept on the observance of which hangs the fate of all human institutions. The wisest of the Pagan philosophers taught, as the first truth of his moral system, that to act

justly and well was to act according to the will of God in public and private matters. Indeed, it may be said that however erroneous, extravagant or absurd its religious creed may appear to be, the political system of every great nation of the ancient world had its sanction in the recognition of man's accountability to an overruling divine authority. Piety and fear, religion to the gods, was the corner-stone of all legislation, and public infamy and execration was the doom of him who derided or scoffed at the national belief. Cicero merely embodied a common universal sentiment when he made the origin of law and source of obligation to be the consummate reason and will of the Supreme Being—*Quamobrem lex vera atque princeps, ratio est recti summi Jovis.* The American people are an integral part of Christendom, professing to yield homage and obedience to the only true faith, by whose primal ordinances their conduct is regulated in all the affairs of life. Thus the living stream of virtue is fed from the fountain of revealed truth. Christianity is the great conservative principle of popular government, and as long as it prevails with power over the hearts and consciences of men, there can be no wild disorder, nor insolent anarchy, nor baleful spirit of revenge and destruction. A community which has been brought under its pervading influence, which obeys its teachings and accepts its guidance, can be safely trusted with the momentous concerns of rational existence—is in a condition for self-government in the proper acceptation of the term. Let it be remembered that absolute sovereignty is the attri-

bute of God alone. To rule *jure divino* belongs not to the one man, nor to the many; neither to the king nor to the people. *Vox populi, vox Dei* is the blasphemous rhodomontade of the demagogue, that accursed bane of free States and arch enemy of rational liberty. Human ordinances, to be productive of good, must ever recognize the controlling power and direction of the Supreme Law-giver. Man, abstractly considered, has no rights whatsoever. In the state of natûre, so-called, he is no better than the beasts that perish. He was created for society, and is subject to be governed in all things by the rules of that primordial relation. The very condition of his social being imposes upon him certain sacred duties and obligations, and in the faithful performance of them he finds the guaranty of his rights and privileges as a member of the community. The fabric of government, whatever its form, must be built on this foundation to be strong and permanent, and make sure of the blessings of peace and happiness. In this sense, the powers that be are ordained of God, and it is the duty of man to obey them as long as they execute judgment with righteousness, and until they are displaced in a lawful manner. The doctrine of equality as taught by rabid atheistical philosophers is a mischievous heresy, subversive alike of virtue and religion. The society which attempts to carry it into practice as an essential principle is doomed to inevitable destruction. It is not hard to ordain a government upon a just and rational basis, operating through the medium of equal and impartial laws, which assure to every one protection in his

true rights of person and property. The chief danger to republican institutions lies in the wicked instigations of designing demagogues, who are always on hand to persuade the people that they are not as well governed as they ought to be, and in the restless and turbulent spirit of mankind, eager for change, and ever willing to lend an ear to seditious harangues."

Mr. Carroll.—"What you have said well accords with my own sentiments, albeit wholly opposed to the favorite axiom of certain voluble descanters on the rights of man. Yet, while in my judgment these doctrines are of paramount weight, I have never been altogether able to reconcile them with the theory of man's capacity for self-government."

Father Soulé.—"Morally speaking, mankind are not capable of governing themselves; they feel at all times the urgent need of help from on High to keep them in the right way, to illumine their minds and purify their hearts, and enable them to avoid the snares and pitfalls of error and depravity. But this fact affords the strongest argument in favor of republican institutions. The very consciousness of our oft-infirmities, of the liability of each and every one of us to be biased and warped by the instigations of self-interest, passion or caprice, furnishes the most powerful incentive for the enactment of such uniformly sound and wholesome laws, and for the rigid execution of such equal and exact justice as will bring the combined force of public sentiment to bear in countervailing individual aberrations from the line of probity and rectitude. Thus, as Montesquieu pithily remarks, "*Les hommes,*

frippons en detail, sont en gros de tres honnctes gens." It would matter little to the substantial good of the State whether the law was ordained by the few or the many, provided all equally participated in the benefits of government. People have enjoyed the highest blessings of liberty under the reign of despotic power. Tyrants have occasionally recognized and acted upon the truth, that the whole art of government was the art of being honest, of doing to others as they would be done by; but such exceptions are as bright spots of verdure amid the burning sands of the desert. There is nothing stable, nothing permanent, nothing uniform or constant in influence and action, save in the application of the fundamental doctrine that the people are the original fountain and source of all political power. This, then, in brief, is the *rationale* of free government; the conservation and diffusion of all beneficial influences in social life; the encouragement and protection of what is good and profitable for the State, and one measure of justice to all of every degree. In the race of life, some will assuredly outstrip others; to rise is the ambition of every reasonable creature, the dead level of equality, of communistic fraternization, is impossible from the first laws of man's nature. Of republics especially is the saying true that, in the observance of degree, priority and place stands

"'The unity and married calm of States.'

"The postulate of self-government, in the just sense, does not imply that every member of the community is of right entitled to a voice in mak-

ing and administering the laws. As a sincere friend of democratic institutions, I heartily reprobate the doctrine of universal suffrage. No man has a natural inherent right to vote, any more than he has a natural inherent right to a suit of broadcloth or a chaise and four. The ballot is purely a conventional affair, a matter of civil contract and agreement, to be ascertained and regulated with reference to the vast interests at stake in the organization of society, and the great purposes it is designed to subserve. The fact that it is impossible to draw the line of suffrage so as not to exclude some good and to include much bad material, is no argument in favor of raising the floodgates and letting in the whole seething stream of ignorance, indigence and vice. As well talk of sealing up the sewers and conduits of the great city of Paris because, in spite of the utmost care, heaps of filth will accumulate in out of the way-places, and once in a while some article of value is washed into the Seine."

Mr. Carroll.—"That, after all, is the veritable apple of discord in our case—the troublesome, ever-recurring, never-ending suffrage question. Already some mad zealots are running riot with the insane dogma of equality, and presently it will be gravely asserted that every son of Adam is born heir to an equal share of the earth's fulness, and entitled to have his say in ordering and directing every department of human intelligence. Of the two evils, which is preferable, the compendious plan of old Noll's canting crew of errant saints, who were given to decide all questions by infallible artillery,

or the monstrous project of allowing, in vital matters, the motley mob of the nation's patriots to find or make the truth with votes? Universal suffrage is the sure forerunner of anarchy, which again is only one remove from despotism."

Father Soulè.—"But surely these enthusiasts will not be permitted to have their own way in so weighty a business. From my intercourse with the leading spirits of the coming revolution, I am persuaded there is an ample fund of wisdom, prudence and skill among them to mould and fashion the breathing form of that genuine republican liberty which is in perfect harmony with the natural order of things, and which, confined within proper constitutional limitations, is entirely compatible with the largest development of national prosperity, growth and power; with the accumulation of wealth, the encouragement of art, and the fair influence and rightful aggrandizement of individual talent and virtue. At least, let there be another grand experiment made before the popular principle is condemned for a vain Utopian dream. Here is the golden opportunity. In the Old World the young Hercules would be strangled in his cradle by the united strength of the reptiles of arbitrary power. In America he will be fostered and nurtured with loving, vigilant care, and grow up into a giant of manly might and beauty. His home is a land flowing with milk and honey, on which a gracious Providence has emptied the horn of abundance. It will be his fault if he does not reap the rich harvest of blessings, which, with prudent husbandry, a diligent hand and a thankful heart, may remain

the inheritance of him and his children for all time. What are those fine lines I heard you repeat this morning? They sounded in my ear like the voice of prophecy."

Mr. Carroll.—"Bishop Berkeley's beautiful apostrophe. What an enthusiast he is, to be sure, about America. It is to be hoped that his poetical vaticinations may not turn out to be as visionary as his metaphysical disquisitions." Saying which, he recited, with becoming spirit, the famous lines:

> "Westward the course of empire takes its way,
> The first four acts already past,
> The fifth shall close the drama with the day;
> Time's noblest offspring is the last."

"It is truly refreshing," continued Mr. Carroll, "to hear you speak so hopefully of our great design. Still one cannot help feeling solicitous about it, when he reflects upon the fate of the free republics of the Old World. To reach the goal of our hopes, we must pass through the fire of revolution, must feel the blight and scourge of civil war. Escaping from the fangs of oppression, we may at last fall a prey to the ambition of some military chieftain. Men are ever prone to make heroes and demigods of successful warriors. Generally speaking, it is the idolatrous worship of mere creatures of accident and fortune; always it is the apotheosis of a slavish sentiment, the last degradation of true manhood and independent spirit. It is an evil day for any people when the sword is master of the sacred seats. There is no surer mode of destroying liberty than the cultivation of a purely military spirit among the people. Look at Rome,

whose motto was '*Ubi castra ibi respublica.*' She sent forth from her democratic loins the most ferocious, remorseless and implacable race in history, pursuing an almost uninterrupted career of rapine and slaughter, until they succeeded in bringing all nations under their iron sway; a people, as a late writer happily says, who, while they were poor, robbed mankind, and as soon as they became rich robbed one another. To the last moment of their short-lived glory, they never lost their insatiable appetite for blood. The *gandia certaminis* of the battlefield were tame in comparison with the gory delights of the amphitheatre. Fearful was the retribution which awaited them. So it has ever been and ever will be with those whose feet are swift to shed blood, and who have not known the way of peace."

Father Soulé.—"But you should consider that the military genius of the Romans was the effect of early habits and training, a sort of hereditary idiosyncrasy. They were a colony of exiles and homeless adventurers, who, having obtained a precarious foothold on a hostile strand, were compelled to rely on their valor and strength of arms to maintain the death struggle for mastery. These were their only resources. The path of safety led to the broad avenue of greatness. Victory after victory over surrounding tribes inflamed the martial ardor, and engendered an ineradicable lust for dominion and conquest. Thus they became a nation of warriors, knights and nobles, ruling by the sword, and suffering themselves, for a period, to be governed by certain arbitrary principles of military precedence.

The patrician element kept its ascendancy until the enjoyment of exclusive privileges made them insolent and overbearing, and drove the commonalty to seek redress under the leadership of successful generals of their own class. The civil broils that ensued only intensified the burning thirst for power and glory, and their arms were never more terrible than when, their liberties lost, they passed under the yoke of imperial despotism. In your case, when your independence is gained, there can be no occasion for constant strife to evoke the demoniac spirit of warlike prowess. With a mere handful of regular troops, you will be able to hold the savages in subjection, and you have nothing to do but to increase and multiply and replenish the wilderness around you; to cultivate the arts of peace and fraternal fellowship, and adorn and beautify this goodly inheritance, which to my eyes, that have seen a large portion of it, bears the palm of excellence over every known region of the habitable globe."

Mr. Carroll.—"Defend it as best we can from foes within and without; be careful to mind our own business, and leave European powers to settle the balance of power any way they like, so that they leave us out of the account. But there is another light, my father, in which we are to examine the subject. How will the revolution in America affect the cause of religion?"

Father Soulé.—"Your inquiry has struck a chord which vibrates to my inmost soul; but it would require a volume to tell all that I feel and think upon that overshadowing theme. The Church of

Christ cannot be an indifferent spectator of the widespread scene of desolation and woe which I have feebly portrayed. It cannot look complacently on at the intolerable iniquity of rulers, causing souls to perish by the thousands under the crushing weight of misery and despair. As faithful stewards of the mysteries and ministers of the mercies of God, it is our chief duty to study how things can be rectified, and never to relax our efforts to ameliorate the condition of suffering humanity. To accomplish a thorough and lasting reformation has been the absorbing topic of my prayerful thoughts, the exclusive object of my most strenuous endeavors The conclusion to which I have come has been indicated in what I have before said. The potent remedy lies in the emancipation of society from feudal thralldom, and the giving a new and hopeful direction to the current of popular thought and feeling."

Mr. Carroll.—"What of the proposed declaration of universal toleration, liberty of conscience, or, as the self-styled reformers call it, right of private judgment?"

Father Soulé.—"There is nothing in that to alarm the fears of true Catholics. The mission of Holy Church is to save a world of perishing sinners. She is not concerned with purely human institutions farther than to exhort men to practice the virtues of peace and charity and good-fellowship; to sow the seeds of brotherly love and kindness, and to prescribe the infallible rule of life, which only can procure enduring public and private benefits. The capacity to think, as well as the

power to act for himself, is presupposed in the plan of man's redemption. One of your greatest writers says truly, that 'out of the rind of one apple tasted the knowledge of good and evil, like two twins clinging together, leaped into the world.' And man is endowed with the faculty of distinguishing between good and evil, error and truth, right and wrong. Yet, at the peril of his immortal soul, he cannot remain a free thinker or a free agent. He must, with humble faith, accept the guidance of one appointed teacher, and learn that all roads lead to perdition, save the narrow way along which stream the cheering rays of a single beacon-light. To this being, groping in thick darkness and ready to faint with despair, Holy Church presents the heavenly boon of hope and consolation, which is nowhere to be found except it be within the hallowed precincts of her awful pale. Of the civil magistrate she asks nothing but the equal privilege which he accords to others—to pursue her calling without molestation, unconstrained by such impious laws as at this time disgrace the Province of Maryland, making it a crime for a bishop or a priest to exercise his functions in public. She derives no power from prince or potentate; she relies not for help on the arm of Cæsar; she is not subject to the edicts of man; her charter is derived from the one Law-giver who is able to save and to destroy. In this day of her greatness, she can laugh to scorn the impotent hosts which are arrayed against her, relying solely on the strength of that wisdom which is better than weapons of war. Her early trials and triumphs were fulfilled as had been

foretold. Her mightiest struggles are ended; no longer will she be constrained to use those carnal instrumentalities to maintain her supremacy, nor to trail her bright robes in the mire of political intrigue and secular commotion. Henceforth her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Of course, the cause of religion must suffer to some extent in the approaching trouble. All the power of the Church will be powerless to prevent the evils which are certain to flow from the cruel wounds of war. When the hearts of men are set on deadly courses, their ears are deaf to the appeals of Christian love and sympathy. These are the irremediable concomitants of bloody strife; we must look to the general result, which will be more liberty, and a firmer and broader foundation for truth and justice, religion and piety. We shall, without question, be gainers by the complete separation of Church and State, or, as its advocates denominate it, the establishment of a Free Church in a free State. It will remove one serious obstacle from our path in the destruction of Anglican prelacy, and by giving ample scope for the wranglings and bickerings of heretical sects, it will hasten the final consummation—a dire confusion of tongues, the dispersion of vain builders, and behold another monument of presumptuous folly and wickedness, a dismantled tower in the midst of an arid plain. But you will find the whole matter fully set forth in my 'Tractate on Infidelity.'"

Mr. Carroll.—"Which I am now perusing diligently in order to meet our adversaries in discussion. Beyond the borders of our province, Popery

is still the rawhead and bloody-bones of vulgar prejudice and superstition, and even here the private chapel is the only lawful place of religious devotion. I agree with you, that as Catholics we are not interested in the form of government under which we live, excepting in so far as it is exponential of a general creed, and that it becomes us to cry as loudly as the rest, '*laissez sa libertie!*' But there comes the carriage, and I have not yet given you the letter for Mr. Arthur Lee, nor the commission for your pupil. When may I look for you back?"

Father Soulè.—"I cannot name the time exactly, but I shall return early in the spring, unless some unforeseen contingency prevents. My own business abroad is soon dispatched. But I have grave misgivings about bringing that other negotiation to a successful issue. France, with an empty treasury, a disorganized and disbanded army, and no navy to speak of, is ill prepared to provoke the ire of her ancient enemy by taking up arms in our quarrel."

Mr. Carroll.—"Yes, it looks to me at this moment like an unpromising embassy you have undertaken in our behalf. Yet, if we can manage to maintain the struggle unaided for a short period, assistance is sure to come to us from that quarter. Meantime, God speed your mission, and restore you in safety to your friends when it is ended. Have you any commands for me?"

Father Soulè.—"Only that in my absence you will assume the part of mentor to that truant boy of mine. If report be true, he needs to be care-

fully looked after just now. You remember the lines:

"Amour, amour, quand tu nous tiens,
On peut bien dire: Adieu prudence!

Mr. Carroll laughed

"I cheerfully undertake the office," said he; "the more so because, as you are aware, I so warmly approve his choice of a wife."

Father Soulé.—"I am heartily glad the affair meets your approbation. Edward wrote me a long letter at Philadelphia, filled with the praises of his lady-love, which was quite as interesting to me as a whole volume of the silly minstrelsy of 'Langue d' Oc.' I made him no reply, for the simple reason that I did not know what to say. To be frank," he added, with comical seriousness, "matrimony is a sort of merchandize I know nothing about; only the initiated are privileged to speak of its 'rites mysterious,' and to give advice to the novices who seek admittance within its holy pale. I shall tell my pupil that in this especial matter I have resigned the trust to you."

Mr. Carroll.—"I accept it with pleasure, although I suspect it will prove a sinecure. In my opinion, the couple are admirably adapted for each other's society. He is certainly in no danger of losing a particle of his zeal for the good cause. The fair Virginian is as fiery a rebel as Mr. Henry. I hope ere long to see them happily embarked 'on the smooth current of domestic joy,' as my favorite poet says."

They entered the house as Mr. Carroll was speaking. In a little while the priest reappeared equipped

for his journey, and entering the carriage, was driven rapidly away for St. Inigo's, whence he intended crossing over to Virginia.

The liberal sentiments we have attributed to Father Soulé were universally shared by the Roman Catholics of Maryland. Of the noble Proprietary of the Province, it has been justly said by Bancroft, that he was the first ruler in the history of the Christian world "to plan the establishment of popular institutions with the enjoyment of liberty of conscience; to advance the career of civilization by recognizing the rightful equality of all religious sects." As early as 1648 the legislature of the colony, on behalf of the people, proclaimed the broadest toleration in matters relating exclusively to conscience and the favor of God, and manfully did their descendants uphold and defend the declaration with pen and sword, with life, fortune and sacred honor. And among the most distinguished men of the Revolution, no one was more thoroughly imbued with the generous and enlightened spirit of free institutions, or had a more sagacious perception of the dangers to which they are constantly exposed, and of the safeguards which are necessary for their protection, than Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the conservative Catholic statesman of Maryland.

CHAPTER II.

"AND now, old fellow," said Carleton to his host shortly after dinner on the Sunday mentioned in the last chapter of the first volume, "comes the sweet sorrow of parting. I will trouble you to have my horse gotten—"

"No, no, Harry," responded his friend, pleadingly; "you surely will not desert me at this pinch. Your folks can spare you for a day or two longer, and I really must insist on your staying to cheer me up; this wretched business has put me confoundedly out of sorts, as you plainly see."

"You are wofully in the dumps, Dickon," replied Carleton. "I do not remember ever to have seen you as much so. Try as I might, I have not been able to get more than a monosyllable out of you for the last three hours, and you scarcely touched a morsel of food at dinner, which I take to be a very alarming symptom in so good a trencher-man as you generally are."

Dick.—"I know I am not company for a cat just at present; but I'll rally by-and-bye—unless

you go away, when I shall be downright miserable, and no mistake; all alone by myself, like John Ford in the play."

Carleton.—"There's no resisting such a piteous appeal as that. A queer figure you would cut in a regular fit of the blue devils. Well, there is nothing of special urgency that requires my immediate presence at home, and you know

> "'I am not that feather to shake off
> My friend when he most needs me.'

Enough; I'll stay, on one condition."

Dick.—"What is that?"

Harry.—"That you answer the question I asked you an hour ago."

Dick.—"Repeat it."

Harry.—"What I wish to know is, do you really believe that cock-and-bull story about the fellow's being the boy's father?"

Dick.—"I hardly know what to believe, Harry. I remember well the woman in whose charge Archie was left—the old harness-maker's widow; she has been dead six years or more."

Harry.—"But why did the rascal wish to steal his own offspring? What was to prevent his going straight to Mr. Thompson and claiming the boy, if he had an honest right to him?"

Dick.—"Because in that case the Collector would have been certain to demand confirmations strong as proofs of Holy Writ, and I imagine the fellow was not prepared to give them."

Harry.—"Your friend Dent, it seems, is as deep in the mud as 'tother chap is in the mire."

Dick.—"My friend? Why, I have never exchanged a dozen words with him, although I have frequently seen him at Mr. Ballantine's, and once or twice at Bonhill. He is the most taciturn and impassive human being I ever beheld; yet his manners and bearing show him to be greatly superior to his class. Mr. Graeme, I know, thinks highly of him, from whom I learned that he enjoys the unlimited confidence of his employers. He has had command of that fine ship ever since she was launched, ten years ago last spring. It is probable that he connived at Archie's abduction, believing the man's story to be true; farther than that, I am convinced he had no hand in the matter."

Harry.—"Yes; but how about Mr. Conrad? Who but Dent is responsible for his forcible detention?"

Dick (wincing smartly).—"That does look bad I must admit, Harry. What it means I cannot for my life conjecture, and when I asked Mr. Graeme, all he said was 'I dinna ken, I dinna ken;' but between us two and the gate-post, I am very sure he knows all about it. He, too, has gotten to be most provokingly mysterious all of a sudden."

Harry.—"His daughter, then, is as much in the dark as the rest of us?"

Dick shrugged his shoulders, elevated his eyebrows, and was silent.

"There is nothing left for us, Dickon," resumed his sympathizing friend and pitcher, "but 'patience and shuffle the cards.' Changing the subject, that sermon to-day was a rouser, and, by the same token, I am reminded that, when at home, it is my custom of a Sabbath afternoon to read a

homily of some sort. Since you are not in the humor of talking, I'll see if I cannot find a more agreeable companion. What have you in the library suitable for Sunday reading?"

Dick.—"Oh, there is a host of orthodox greybeards, get one of them and read to me—Atterbury, if congenial; he is my favorite of the lot; at least, the easiest of digestion."

Carleton went for the book. On returning to the dining-room he discovered that his host had disposed himself, doubtless for the better convenience of listening, astride a chair, with his head on his arms and his back to the fire.

Selecting such a homily as suited his own taste, or to be more literal, such an one the text of which struck his fancy, the devout cavalier, having drawn his chair nearer to the window, began to read aloud to his very quiet and apparently deeply interested auditor. Besides having a full, rich and melodious voice, he was a practiced elocutionist, and did ample justice to his subject, pausing once in a while, as he proceeded, at the close of a particularly striking passage, to let it have its due influence on his appreciative friend. Thus our vicarious preacher went on from point to point of his eloquent discourse, and was in the midst of a most searching application to the heart and conscience of his fellow-sinner, when, to his amazement and chagrin, Dick sprang suddenly to his feet, crying out, "Eureka! I have it—just the very thing,"—

"Well, my pattern of good manners," said Carleton, "I am truly glad to learn that Doctor Atterbury's excellent sermon has inspired you with a

happy idea; of course you have heard every word of it?"

"Ten thousand pardons, my dear boy," replied Dick; "I meant no sort of disrespect to the good Doctor or yourself. I could not help it for my life; it's just an utter impossibility to keep my mind from running on yesterday's doings."

"And what new project has the retrospect disclosed to your inventive genius?" inquired Carleton, with stately courtesy, trying to look as he imagined became a grave divine who had been mortified to find that the good seed he had been industriously sowing had fallen on a hopelessly sterile spot.

"The wonder is," replied Dick, "that I had not thought of it sooner. You remember the stranger I pointed out to you in church this morning—sitting in Mr. Ballantine's pew?"

"Well, what of him?"

"Why, this: he came down from Alexandria in the *Endeavor* last night, expecting to get a passage for foreign parts, and I overheard Mr. Ballantine telling Colonel Littleton that he would have to send him around to the Rappahannock in the *Endeavor* to meet the *Katrine*. Dent, he said, had to go first to Hobb's Hole for additional freight and another passenger. Now, my plan is for you and me to go too; there is plenty of time, the weather permitting, for us to make Merry Point several hours in advance of the *Katrine;* then, we'll land, get a warrant from Colonel Gordon, who is a magistrate, summon a posse to aid us, and capture the whole ship's crew."

Carleton was delighted. "The device is excellent;

I'm your man," he exclaimed, springing up with alacrity; "that is one of them, for had we not best carry a sufficient force along with us?"

"No," replied Dick; "there's no time for collecting it. We will have to hurry to get aboard before dark. Mr. Ballantine will be shy of trusting his vessel on the bay; some of Dunmore's cruisers might be lying around, and they don't let a sail pass unchallenged. We shall have to creep out in the night-time. Besides, if we made a stir about it, he would know at once what we were going for, and might not be willing to risk his schooner in such a dangerous enterprise."

"Well, then, you and I will about it; 'the fewer men, the greater share of honor,'—but, I say, Dick, we must not let the servants have a hint of it. I have a fancy to take all our friends by surprise."

"How, if we should fail?"

"We fail; but screw your courage to the sticking place—"

"O bother your Shakespeare," said Dick, ringing the bell. "Mr. Carleton's horse and mine, James, and one for yourself, and be quick about it. He will have to go with us to bring the horses back; but I can manage him."

Their preparations were soon made. On the road Carleton remarked: "There is one thing I don't like in your programme, Dick. Why say a word to Mr. Ballantine? He will be sure to suspect what our design is after the commotion here, and fall to questioning us, and how are we going to put him off?"

"Easy enough," said Dick; "I'll tell him—which

is true in a sense, you know—that you wish to go to Lancaster on pressing business with Colonel Gordon."

Carleton shook his head. "That will not pass current with him. He is my father's general factor in business matters, and he knows, as well as you do, that I have none of my own in that quarter. Being a gentleman, he would not directly impugn your veracity; but in all likelihood he would say to us, 'You are welcome to go, young gentlemen, on one condition: it is probable you will fall in with the *Katrine;* if so, you must give her a wide berth;' the long and short of it is, that the long-headed old merchant is too shrewd a bird to be caught by our chaff; he will have our secret out of us before you can say Jack Robinson."

"Then," said Dick, reining back his horse with a crest-fallen air, "we had as well turn back."

"By no means," replied Carleton, eagerly. "Come ahead. We'll just take the bull by the horns—that is, board the *Endeavor* from the opposite side of the creek without asking the owner's leave or license. The skipper we both know for a good-natured simpleton; he is not apt to be inquisitive, and if he does ask questions, we need not answer them."

Dick readily agreed to this alteration of his plan of campaign. In a little while the friends stood upon the deck of the schooner. She was preparing to weigh anchor. The captain, a mild-mannered man and—*rara avis* of the unfeathered aquatic tribe—not given to swearing, was taken all aback by their sudden appearance. "I'll agree to die," he began, with his favorite expletive.

"Surprised to see us, no doubt, Mr. Braun?" interrupted Carleton. "Alloway and I have a business appointment with a party in Lancaster. By the greatest good luck we happened to hear you were going round in the vessel, and made all speed to catch you; we are in the nick of time."

"But, Master Harry, and same to you, Master Richard," remonstrated the skipper, "my orders is most pertickler."

"Oh, I understand all that; don't give yourself the least trouble; we'll make it right with Mr. Ballantine when we get back. There's not a moment to lose; the wind is falling, and you'll need every capfull. Up with your anchor, and let's be off, or this gentleman," bowing to the stranger, "will lose his passage." But seeing the wary skipper still inclined to debate the point from his muttering about it's being "contrairy to orders," Carleton tore a leaf from his pocketbook, hurriedly wrote a few lines, and throwing the paper to a negro who was passing in a boat, bade him give it Mr. Ballantine. "There, sir," said he, with assumed sternness, "that takes the blame, if any, off your shoulders. I have assumed the whole responsibility of your deviating from orders."

Seemingly satisfied, Mr. Braun got the vessel under weigh, and, coming back, conducted the party to the neat and commodious cabin of the *Endeavor*, which had been fitted up expressly for conveying passengers from place to place on the Chesapeake and its tributaries. The young adventurers found their *compagnon-du-voyage* to be another of those discreet tradesmen from the "land o' cakes," who

had thought best to keep out of harm's way by returning to their native clime until the advent of better times for people of inoffensive manners and speculative talents. Carleton in vain tried to entrap him into a discussion of the one overshadowing topic, the war with England. He put it aside each time it was mentioned with polite address, and finally cut the disagreeable subject short by the pointed speech, that "when a lad he was fule enough to be out *in the '45*, and if the gude Lord had forgiven him for that, he deserved to be hanged and quartered if he was ever caught in another such scrape." Seeing that they could not get up a scene with the "false Thane," as Carleton dubbed him, the cavaliers soon followed the worthy Scotchman's good example, and turned in for the night.

How long they had been sleeping they could not tell, before they were rudely aroused by a sudden violent shock and tremor of the vessel, which well nigh threw them from their berths. At the same time there was a great noise, rattling of cordage, creaking of bolts and stamping of feet on deck. "She has gone about in a jiffy," exclaimed Dick. "What can it mean?" and he hastened to see. At the head of the companion-way he met the skipper; he was as pale as a ghost and trembling in every limb.

"What's to pay, Mr. Braun?" But before the latter could reply, Dick's question was answered by a blinding flash of light, followed by the stunning boom of a cannon, and a ball went whizzing high over them, and fell in the water a quarter of a mile ahead.

"We are lost, Master Richard; it's one of them chaps from below," said Braun in a terrified whisper, as if he were fearful lest they might hear him speak.

Alloway was soon joined by his companions, whom he in a few words made to comprehend the state of the matter.

"It is useless to try our heels, Harry," said he, aside, to Carleton; "Braun is scared out of his wits, and he and the mate are our sole dependence among the crew. We are in for it—there she goes again." As he spoke another shot, aimed as the first, came screaming through the frosty night air.

"Down with everything but the mainsail and jib, Mr. Braun, and heave to; the next time we shall catch it if we don't heed the last admonition. There she is."

The dark outline of a large vessel was plainly visible a short distance to the southward. Alloway's commands were promptly executed, and as the *Endeavor* wore round, the stranger passed slowly by on her starboard side, within pistol shot. She was close-reefed alow and aloft, ready for any emergency, and evidently on the *qui vive* for passing vessels. In a twinkling more, she hove to and lowered a boat, which pulled swiftly straight for the *Endeavor*. The day was just beginning to dawn and there was light enough for our party to see that they were in the Rappahannock, and immediately off the mouth of the Curritoman. Not a word was spoken as they stood intently gazing at the rapidly approaching boat. It was soon alongside; a smart young fellow, looking every inch a true English sailor, catching

hold of the shrouds, bounded on the deck of the *Endeavor*, and called out in a tone of authority, "Who commands here?" Then, regarding the group who confronted him with a look of astonishment, "Beg pardon, gentlemen," he continued, saluting them respectfully, "to whom must I make known Captain Markham's request?"

"To either one or to all three of us; it makes little difference, I imagine," replied Dick, to whom the officer last looked.

"Then, I am instructed to say that he will be pleased to see you on board the *Atalanta*."

"Decidedly polite, Harry; there is no help for it; we'll have to go. Markham, too; that's devilish queer."

"Rather more fun than we bargained for, Dickon," replied his friend in the same low tone; "but it is exciting, nevertheless; let's see what it leads to. What say you, Mr. Hunter," raising his voice, "shall we go in a body."

"I am minded to gang mysel', young sirs," replied the Scotchman. "Ye maun do as ye loicke."

"Crusty old hunk! but he shan't be spokesman," and stepping forward, Carleton said to the officer in waiting, "We have all concluded to accept Captain Markham's gracious invitation, sir. Come, Dick, lead the way; you are Captain of our little craft for this occasion. The *Atalanta!* a fleet-footed damsel she looks to be; the *Eagle* would be better still, a royal bird, that "prunes the immortal wing and cloys his beak."

"By Jupiter," said Dick, "she *is* a beauty."

What the subject of these rapturous encomiums was doing there will in due time appear.

CHAPTER III.

TO annihilate time and space at his will and pleasure is the immemorial privilege of the story writer. The obsequious genii of fancy come at his beck and call, and whisk him through the boundless ether of dreamland to whatever spot there is most urgent need of his presence.

Whether George Graeme's love of Mary Littleton was the spur of his ambition, or whether he had found in the "last infirmity of noble minds" an incentive

"To scorn delights and live laborious days,"

we cannot undertake to decide. Yet it is our privilege to record the gratifying fact that at this time the report of Dean and Faculty spoke goldenly of the profit the young Virginian was reaping in the arduous and unflagging pursuit of his chosen studies. He had taken chambers in the college, and here on an evening in the month of October in that year we see him in his cosy and comfortable room in graceful dishabille of dressing-gown

and slippers, and dishevelled locks, of a somewhat pale and emaciated, though not dyspeptic frame, and wearing upon the whole the unconscious air and attitude of an earnest and grateful delver in the mine of knowledge.

On the table in front of him was a pretty model of Newcomen's steam-engine, which he had borrowed from the Museum, and from a paper of notes and drawings spread out before him he was intent on investigating the principle and practical result of Watt's great discovery.

It was nearly ten years since science revealed the wonder to her favorite son as he was walking on the Green of Glasgow, "at the point of the road half-way between the Herd's House and Arn's Well." Unlike the Syracusan worthy, he did not straightway fall into an ecstasy of delight, but quietly turned the matter over in his mind, and set about constructing a simple model to explain and illustrate his invention. He was doomed for a season to feel the bitterness of hope deferred; scientific experts gave out that his engine was not worth a rush, and he had a hard struggle to bring it to the crucial test of fair experiment. But at last his triumph came, and with it came the mighty revolution which has shaken the material universe from centre to circumference. The genius of iron strength has yielded tame obedience to the will of man, and now mountain and valley, and hill and plain, the unfathomable recesses of earth and ocean, reverberate the stunning din of his mocking song, as he scoffs at the pride of fleshly power:

"I blow the bellows, I forge the steel
In all the shops of trade;
I hammer the ore and turn the wheel,
Where my arms of strength are made.

I manage the furnace, the mill, the mint,
I carry, I spin, I weave,
And all my doings I put in print
On every Saturday eve!"

On the evening to which we refer, our student had not long been occupied with his absorbing task before he was interrupted by the entrance of a porter with a letter for him. A bright flush of joy put to flight the pale cast of thought from his brow, as he recognized his mother's hand-writing, and, pushing aside his work, he was soon buried in the interesting news from home;—interesting, as it proved to be, beyond anything he had ever before read; for it contained the story of that mother's singularly-eventful life, of which up to this moment he had not had the remotest intimation. This document is, unfortunately, missing from our collection. We have no recourse but to supply the deficiency with a narrative compiled from other sources of information:

On that day, ever-memorable in British annals, in which the Chevalier Charles Edward, like a true hero of Old Romance, set out from Rome with the stout resolution to make or mar the cruel fates, an adventure which has been described with seeming justice as one of the most extraordinary, splendid, and hopeless ever recorded in history, there lived in hermetical seclusion among the fastnesses of Cum-

berland, in England, one Sir Edward Markham, baronet, third in regular descent, from the devoted liegeman who fell by Falkland's side fighting for the King at Newberry. Early in life the good knight, now well stricken in years, had heedlessly blundered into making an uncongenial matrimonial alliance. The affinities, as the saying is nowadays, were all awry at the start, and the consequences were unending disquiet, vexation and misery to the high contracting parties to what the world usually styles a very brilliant match. Fortunately, the marriage was unproductive of fruits; there was no innocent offspring to be made unhappy in countless ways by the conjugal contretemps. As is customary in such cases of incompatible married life, there were two sides to the question; public opinion was at the time equally divided as to which of the two, baron or *feme*, was to be ascribed the largest share of the censure so ready to be lavished on either or both; but inasmuch as the tough old knight outlived his gentle Xantippe (for such she really was) for many a long year, and never afterwards evinced the least hankering after the delicacies of wedlock, it is not unfair to suppose that he had discovered a venomous spider, of the species tarantula, in his first and only hymenial dumpling. He barely had time to felicitate himself on having providentially gotten rid of his terrible domestic plague when a post came from India with the distressing news of the sudden death of the one being whom he loved of all the world—a brother next of age to himself.

Frederick Markham was bred a soldier, had fought

with marked distinction under Marlborough, and till within a short while after George the First ascended the throne he had spent his dearest action in the tented field. A brave, disinterested spirit, he followed the great captain to assured victory, and thought of nothing but the glory of England, while the welkin resounded with hosannas of praise to the conquering chieftain—a thunderbolt of war, yet a reproach to his race. Sharing in the political sentiments of his eldest brother, he espoused the cause of the exiled family from a conviction of duty, because he honestly believed them to be the legitimate sovereigns of Britain. His devotion was not the offspring of maudlin sentimentality, nor of designing ambition, but the outgiving of simple loyalty, of sincere, earnest and single-hearted fidelity to principle. He saw his idol, and straightway there was a miracle of undeification. Yet he could not abase himself before the uncouth image of kingly imposture that had been brought over from Zell to rule in a country the most illustrious in arts and arms of any in the world. Disgusted and heartsick, he sold out of his regiment, and taking service with the East India Company, sailed for Madras with the lovely and courageous young wife of the Campbells of Glenorchy, to whom he had been a year before united. Here his energies were wholly enlisted in furthering his own fortunes. In the course of time he managed to scrape together as much money as he desired, and was looking anxiously forward to the day he had fixed upon for his return to England, when the stroke of an overwhelming calamity laid plan and projector prone

in the dust. A pestilential fever, incident to that climate so deadly to Europeans, visited the place of his residence, and claimed for its victims first the father, then three of the children, and, lastly, the noble woman who had insisted upon sharing her husband's lot in that remote and inhospitable clime. Two children were left—one a delicate boy of five or six summers; the other a girl, an infant hardly a year old. They were brought home to England and consigned to the charge of their uncle, Sir Edward, and well and tenderly did the good old baronet undertake the pious trust and strive to fill the vacuum in the orphaned lives of the poor unfortunates. He took them to his heart of hearts, and made them completely his own children. From that moment he had no thought, no care, no aspiration, no hope, that did not centre in them. And when they came to repay his loving kindness with more than filial affection, the gloomy donjon-keep of a castle in which he had been so long immured was irradiated from turret to foundation-stone with the heavenly light of happiness and home. He had one other brother, from whom he was separated by an impassable gulf. Differing in every element of character, there was nothing in common between him and William Markham but the name they had inherited from the same father.

Of the latter person it may be said that he was a shining example of prostituted talents—an accomplished time-server and supple court tool, who recognized only one cardinal maxim in life, which was the utter abnegation of all fixed principles of conduct, and adapting himself with marvellous ease

to the ever changing modes and measures of that starred and spangled scene "where low brow'd Baseness wafts perfume to Pride." Possessed of such versatile gifts, and with a rare genius for petty intrigue, he rapidly rose in favor with the new administration, and was employed in sundry lucrative offices of a confidential and by no means scrupulously honorable description. To the disaffected party he contrived to render himself particularly obnoxious by his zeal and activity in ferretting out the secret plots and machinations of the Jacobites. It was in this manner that he had incurred the everlasting displeasure of his brother, Sir Edward, who, although far from being violent and demonstrative in his general demeanor, was nevertheless a staunch and conscientious adherent of the opposition side in the great constitutional debate concerning the legitimacy of the Hanoverian succession. At William Markham's unnatural instigation he had been harried and persecuted into taking the odious oath which was prescribed for suspected recusants, an indignity which he never forgave, nor would he afterwards permit his tormentor's name to be mentioned in his presence. Thus these brothers became totally estranged, no rare occurrence in those disjointed times.

So strict for many years had been his retirement from the busy scenes of the outer world that Sir Edward Markham was not advised of the quixotic undertaking of the young chevalier until it burst upon the country with the sudden shock of an earthquake. From the day that the adventurous Prince raised the royal standard of his father at

Glenfinnan amid the loud huzzas of the devoted band, who

> Wi' Highland bonnets on their heads
> And claymores bright and clear,
> Had come to fight for Scotland's right
> And the young chevalier,

until, like a brilliant meteor of conquest that same standard waved proudly over the towers of Derby; rumor upon rumor of his victorious prowess and enthusiastic reception penetrated the hills and echoed along the valleys of Cumberland, kindling in the old knight's breast the flame of ancient loyalty and causing him to pray with redoubled fervor that God would be pleased to give the rightful king his own again. In his own person he had respected the obligations of the oath he had taken under duress, but at the same time he took pains to instill into his nephew a deep veneration for the principles which had been the sacred heritage of the Markham's from the blessed period of the Restoration—with what effect was soon made lamentably apparent.

Young Henry Markham, now in his twentieth year and a student at Oxford, where he was in no danger of forgetting his early Jacobite proclivities, took it into his head one fine morning that it was his imperative duty to tender fealty and homage to "him they called the Pretender," and not stopping to count the consequences of the rash and irrevocable step, escaped the vigilance of his tutelary divinities and posted away for the chevalier's camp. He reached it the very evening that

Charles Edward, with a sad presage of the coming catastrophe, reluctantly yielded to the determination of his council of war and gave orders for the fatal retreat. The scales of destiny had been turned, and the feelings of the infatuated youth when his visions of another grand coronation pageant at London vanished in the air, may be better imagined than described. Thus, in an evil hour, had Henry Markham attached himself to a falling house and was buried beneath its ruins. Again and again has the inspired pen of genius celebrated the romantic story of that one brief year of tumultuous life in the dreary career of overweening ambition, and even the stern Nemesis of impartial history has dealt gently and compassionately with the chivalrous leader of that wildest of forlorn hopes.

Sir Edward Markham was duly apprised of his nephew's elopement from Oxford and of his subsequent conduct; but as he was never heard to utter a word in disapproval of the insane act, certain of his neighbors were uncharitable enough to charge it to the account of his treasonable instigation. However that might be, it was soon painfully manifest that he felt a vital interest in the success of the bold adventurer, since in so short a time as a week after he received the tidings of the overwhelming disaster at Culloden Muir he went broken-hearted to his grave. On his death, William Markham took possession of the estates and baronetcy, and instantly began to signalize his patriotic zeal afresh by the conspicuous part he bore in wreaking summary vengeance upon the helpless insurgents who had escaped the butcheries

of the brutal Cumberland. In him the bloody-minded Hawley and the hangman Howard found a willing and able coadjutor in the congenial work of decorating the Rikargate of Carlisle with the hideous mementoes of civil strife.

His treatment of his niece was in perfect keeping with his selfish and heartless nature. But the high-spirited girl did not long endure his hateful guardianship. She fled to Scotland and placed herself under the protection of her mother's powerful family, most of whom had early given in their allegiance to the reigning sovereign. Here she found a secure asylum in the house of her maternal aunt, who was married to a Hieland Laird named Leslie. At her instance, she thenceforth assumed her mother's name, for the reason that the one she inherited from her father was associated with the most agonizing reminiscences of bitter griefs, disappointed hopes and relentless persecutions. And it was here that John Graeme, junior partner of the proud commercial house whose head was in Glasgow, and whose members strewed the Atlantic coast from Chesapeake Bay to the Spanish main, came all the way from Virginia in search of the noble wife to whom we have been introduced.

CHAPTER IV.

APPENDED to Mrs. Graeme's letter was a postscript from Lucy. After acquainting her brother with such items of current news as were likely to interest him, she took the sisterly liberty of giving him some seasonable advice on a delicate topic—videlicet, that the sooner he threw that luckless passion for a certain young lady overboard the better it would be for his peace of mind and prospects in life. To this subject Mrs. Graeme had made no allusion, rightly conjecturing that George would find so much of new and startling moment in her own memoirs as to banish for the time every other consideration from his thoughts. Waiving his sister's missive aside with a suppressed sigh, the young man turned again to his mother's letter, which he read and re-read with the deepest emotion. It was no longer surprising to him that she should be so much alarmed at the imminence of civil war, and should implore him to stay where he was until the advent of better times. It has been well remarked that in seasons of revolution it is often more difficult to decide what is one's duty, than to do it when it

has once been determined. So it fared with our young Virginian. Heretofore his mother's lightest wish had been to him in the nature of a positive command. In the present instance, it is true, there was no peremptory mandate, only affectionate entreaty; yet he felt how devoutly her heart was in the matter, and how sorely grieved she would be if he did not do as she desired. But, as has been intimated, he fully sympathized with his countrymen in America, and deemed it to be incumbent upon him to take a part in the impending struggle. In this dilemma he sat for some time immersed in anxious thought. At length he arose, and reverently folding up the interesting document, locked it away carefully in his desk. Then, having arranged his dress, he went out.

As he was passing through the college grounds, still pondering intently on what he had been reading, he was suddenly accosted with the question, "Going into the city, young gentleman?"

Looking up he found himself confronted with a person in a clerical garb, who was scanning him critically through a pair of piercing grey eyes that peered out from beneath the shaggiest of brows. The latter were as black as raven's down, though his head was as white as snow. His manner was abrupt, not to say dictatorial, as George thought, yet he replied with a respectful salutation, "Yes, sir."

"Then, perchance, you can show me the way to Mr. William Hamilton's abode—of the mercantile house of Hamilton & Osborn," said the gentleman.

"With pleasure, sir," replied George; "it lies directly in my route."

"You, if I mistake not, are the Virginian student of whom I have heard," continued the stranger in the same blunt, positive tone, as they walked on together. "I have friends over there of whom I am anxious to get tidings."

George.—"I know most families of Scottish people in Virginia, sir; may I inquire who are your friends?"

Stranger.—"Are you acquainted with the Wisharts?"

George.—"Intimately well; they are my near relations."

Stranger.—"You are not a Wishart?"

George.—"No, sir; my name is George Wishart Graeme, after an old schoolfellow of my father, a famous preacher in Edinburgh, as I have been told, though I prefer to think it was after the illustrious martyr of the Free Kirk of Scotland."

Stranger.—"And you are a son of John Graeme? Not like him; resemble your mother. She was a Campbell, I believe?"

George (with slight embarrassment).—"Her name was Ellen Campbell when she married."

Stranger.—"Had she ever another name?"

George.—"Not meaning to give you a short answer, sir, I do not think my family affairs are a fit subject of conversation with a stranger."

Stranger.—"Very right; but I happen to know much more than you think of you and yours. It is truly a sad story; one of the many of that wicked rebellion. And now there is another brewing in America. I am growing very uneasy about my friends there. Are your countrymen all demented?

Can they dare to cope with the most powerful nation in the world—they a mere handful of people scattered over a boundless region of savage wilds?"

George (with spirit).—"They have been forced to take up arms in defence of their dearest rights as British subjects. Their cause is just before that Being who has said the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong."

Stranger (with sudden and deep feeling).—"Do you know what war is, young man? I have seen it in all its horrors—unscrupulous, relentless, all-devouring Moloch. It foments all evil, is allied to all vices and deformities; it riots in brute strength and glories in destroying power; it raises the wicked and profane to eminence, makes a pandemonium of the earth, and drags its triumphal car over the venerated relics of ages. It spares neither age nor sex; makes slaves of the weak and helpless; its progress is marked in blood; it fills the world with imprecations, misery, wretchedness and despair. Of all its ghastly forms, civil strife is the most abhorrent. Smollett's picture is not overwrought, as I can testify."

George.—"It is indeed, sir, a fearful thing to contemplate; but the responsibility rests not with my countrymen. Very different was your own case. What were you contending for?—a choice between two—" he paused.

"Tyrants you were going to say," replied the gentleman with a kindly smile. "You have nothing to fear from me; but beware how you let that hot blood of yours boil over in this city of trusty liegemen. Well, well, perhaps your countrymen

know best what their duty requires of them—the issue is with the All-wise One. Can you tell me anything of one Davies, a Presbyterian minister, president of a college in America?"

"I have often heard of him, sir," replied George; "he has been dead many years."

The stranger received the announcement with evident concern. "He was truly a good man and an eloquent preacher. I met with him on his visit to Scotland, soliciting funds for his seminary. His health was then exceeding precarious. I remember how much tickled he was at Witherspoon's hit at the highflyers under the ironical designation of moderates, apropos of which I told him a pleasant anecdote of an old covenanting preacher who once said to his congregation: 'My friends, it is as impossible for a moderate to enter the kingdom of heaven as it is for a sow to sit upon the top of a thistle and sing like a mavis.'"

George laughed. "That's Mr. Hamilton's at the opposite corner."

"Are you not going thither?"

"No, sir; my destination is some squares farther."

They parted company. The gentleman had not thought proper to tell his name, and George made it a point of politeness not to ask him for it. A short walk brought him in front of a large and handsome residence. He rang the bell, and inquired of the servant who answered it if Mr. Ballantyne was at home. "He was at that moment gone to Mr. Hamilton's," was the reply. Thither young Graeme followed him.

"Here he is in the nick of time," exclaimed

Mr. Hamilton, as George was ushered into a room where a score of persons were assembled, eager to hear the news which the ship just arrived at the Broomilaw had brought across the ocean.

"Pardon me, Mr. Hamilton," said he, "I wish to speak with Mr. Ballantyne on pressing private business."

"No need to apologize, lad; I was on the eve of sending for you," replied the kind old merchant. "I wish to have a word with you myself presently on a matter of business. But first let me make you known to an old friend of your family, and a far awa' cousin, I believe," turning to the stranger, who was standing at his side.

"We have met before," said the gentleman, very much amused at George's embarrassment, as he took him cordially by the hand. "I am the namesake of whom you are nowise proud, young gentleman. Your head is running on martyrs, eh? What say you, friend Hamilton, after that mortifying speech can I, in self-respect, recognize him as a kinsman?"

"What has the lad been saying?" replied Mr. Hamilton; "nothing indiscreet, I'll warrant."

Mr. Wishart explained the point of the joke. There was a hearty laugh at the young Virginian's expense, which he took in very good part. Then the conversation, which had been interrupted by his entrance, was resumed. It turned upon the one all-engrossing topic, the threatened rupture with the colonies. To most of the company the event was beyond measure deplorable. It foreboded incalculable detriment, if not ruin, to the lucrative

trade in which so large a portion of their capital was embarked. The fact is well known that at this time the Scotch were beginning to make rapid strides on the road to commercial prosperity and material opulence. But their operations were well nigh restricted to the American provinces and the West India Islands. The English, on the contrary, roamed where they listed, and, particularly, had a monopoly of the fabulously rich products of those regions where "the gorgeous East showered on her kings barbaric, pearls and gold." Unexampled wealth attended their respective enterprises; yet in one respect the difference was notably in favor of the hardy and persevering Scot; his accumulations were all the legitimate profits of mercantile acumen, industry and thrift, never the ill-gotten fruits of wholesale robbery and extortion, as was too often the case with the Anglo-Indian adventurer. But what matters it how nations grow rich and powerful! *Unde habet quaeret nemo, sed oportet habere.* Still it is curious to mark how splendidly the good old rule of Robin Hood was worked out by Robert Clive on the banks of the sacred river in spite of the prayers of Imaum and Brahmin, and what a nice distinction is sometimes taken by learned casuists between the natural gratification of freebooting propensities and the wholesome severities, the merciful chastisements and righteous exactions which have accompanied every effort to make the rest of mankind acquainted with the blessings of European civilization. Of course all is done out of pure charity for the heathen. There is no such thing among Christian

people as the *auri sacra fames!* But we are growing satirical, which decidedly is not our cue.

"Well, well, gentlemen," said the good-humored host, when he thought the debate was becoming monotonous, "there appears to be no change for the better in the posture of affairs abroad. We can do nothing but possess our souls in patience. Since our views are widely at variance, and as none of us exactly agree in opinion with our young friend here, suppose we drop the subject. I had a most unexpected visitor this morning. I'll wager none of you can tell who he was."

"Did he come in the vessel?" asked Mr. Ballantyne.

"No; but he was very curious concerning the movements of another vessel, the *Katrine*, and particularly desired to obtain all the information I could give him about the master of our bark. I readily told him all I knew of the party in question which, though precious little, was, as far as it went, to his credit."

"But you have not told us who this inquisitive person was," said Mr. Ballantyne.

"He is well known to the present company by fame at least," replied Mr. Hamilton; "my visitor was no less a personage than Sir William Markham."

"Sir William Markham!" exclaimed Geo. Graeme, involuntarily; "is he here in the city?"

Mr. Hamilton shook his head. "He came at a late hour last night, and left immediately after our interview post-haste for London. No one knew of his coming or going but myself."

"Very mysterious," said Mr. Ballantyne; "I hope he did not intimate that there was anything wrong about Dent."

"On the contrary he was evidently well gratified by the account I gave him of the skipper," replied Mr. Hamilton.

"What sort of a person did he appear to be, sir?" George ventured to ask in a somewhat hesitating voice.

"You mean Sir William, lad? A grand man, a very grand man."

This emphatic encomium was addressed to the whole company.

"He stands well in Parliament," said Mr. Wishart, who had not failed to perceive how greatly interested the Virginian was in the English baronet. "Hamilton, if these gentlemen will excuse us, my young kinsman and I will have a word together in private."

No one objecting to so reasonable a request, they were shown to a separate room, where we must take the liberty of turning the lock on them for the present.

CHAPTER V.

THE grey towers of Markham Castle looked out on a varied expanse of mountain and woodland, intersected here and there by undulating plains and fertile valleys. The site had obviously been selected with an eye to military defence in the days when every man's hand was against his neighbor; when the chivalrous custom prevailed of taking all you could and holding fast to what you took by might and main, and when my Lord Warden of the Marches found no bed of roses in his high office of custodian of the King's peace in that debatable border land. It stood upon the edge of a batling cliff that jutted into a small lake, which was fed by two bold streams, the natural boundaries on either side of the broad ancestral domain. Immediately adjoining it was a table-land of a few acres; then came the sloping lawn carpeted with a brilliant green sward, beyond which stretched the vast variegated park, and leaving that one emerged upon a bleak, brown and barren tract, the home of the red deer, the fox and the badger. The general aspect of the scenery was wild, picturesque and

romantic; yet the adjacent grounds displayed evidences of the tasteful hand of improved cultivation. On one side a large portion of the lawn had been converted into a beautiful flower garden and a plantation of rare trees and shrubs, and was artistically laid out in neat and trim parterres, walks and avenues. At the end of the principal garden walk, on the margin of the lake, stood a small pavilion or summer-house, overrun with clambering vines of the honeysuckle, clamatis and woodbine. From this point the view was surpassingly grand. Looking across the glassy lake one could see the majestic Solway sweeping on to the main, and farther still the eye could discern the long line of sea-coast where the numerous sails were passing and repassing in endless processions. On the right hand a clear sparkling rivulet, flashing in sunny glances through the forest glades, came dancing to the merry music of a myriad cascades down from its pearly cavern in the encircling mountains, over which domineered the haughty crests of Skiddaw and Glaramara.

This summer-house was a favorite seat of Lady Markham in her morning and evening walks. It was the crowning feature of the little domestic paradise which the hand of affection had prepared for her especial delight in the midst of those rough scenes of untamed nature; lovely to look upon at all seasons of the year, but most attractive when arrayed in the gorgeous apparel of summer—when

> Iris there with humid bow
> Waters the odorous banks, that blow
> Flowers of every mingled hue
> Than her purfled scarf can show.

It was near the close of a day in the early part of October of the present year. Lady Markham was busy in the garden giving directions for the protection of the plants from the nipping frosts which would be soon at hand. Presently her little daughter came running to her in breathless eagerness from the summer-house, saying there was a boat on the lake with two boys in it, and a gentleman on the other shore was calling to them to come back and throwing his arms about as if in great distress. She hastened to the spot. The boat was just passing, running before the wind which was blowing freshly, and the juvenile sailors, in the wildest glee, were enjoying the sport hugely and laughing and jeering at the outré figure of their disconsolate tutor across the lake, whose vigilance they had outwitted. They waved their hats gallantly to the lady as they glided swiftly by, and, heedless of her warning gesture, when they had gone a short distance farther attempted to go about. In doing so, owing to unskillful handling, the sail gibed with sudden violence, and in a twinkling the light cockle-shell of a craft was floating keel upwards, and the luckless urchins were struggling for life in the water a hundred yards from shore. Fortunately, relief was near at hand, and they were saved from the watery grave their recklessness seemed to covet. One of the game-keepers chanced to be passing at the critical moment. He came to their rescue in a boat, and conveyed them to the lodge. Thither Lady Markham hurried by a path through the grounds. She was greatly relieved to find that the little adven-

turers had received no other mishap than a good wholesome ducking, which they richly deserved for their disobedience and temerity. They had been put to bed by the porter's wife while their clothes were drying. From her Lady Markham learned that they were children of Mr. Asburton, whose residence could be seen on the opposite bank of the lake. She gave orders for them to be brought to the castle, and was leaving the lodge when she encountered at the door a stranger, a tall, dark man of a grave and rather ceremonious demeanor. He saluted her with respectful courtesy, although there was something of embarrassment in his manner.

"I have the honor to address Lady Markham, if I mistake not," said he. "My name is Asburton. I should not have intruded here, I beg your ladyship to believe, had it not been for the accident to my boys, of which I was a moment ago apprised by their tutor. Permit me to tender my grateful acknowledgment of your kindness, and to express the wish that you will convey to Sir William my unfeigned regret for what has happened."

"There is no cause for regret nor any occasion for explanation or apology on your part, Mr. Asburton," interrupted Lady Markham; "the little fellows are none the worse for the accident, and for myself I esteem it a fortunate event which makes known to me a gentleman of whom I have frequently heard my husband speak in terms of sincere respect and consideration."

The strange visitor received this gracious declaration with marked surprise and increased embarrassment.

"Pardon me, your ladyship," said he, bowing low; "am I to believe,—but, no; it cannot be possible that you are ignorant of the relations which have for a long time subsisted between Sir William Markham and myself?"

"I assure you, sir," replied Lady Markham with dignity, "that I have yet to hear the first unkind word towards you from Sir William's lips. It is not his fault that your intercourse has not been more cordial."

Mr. Asburton was visibly abashed and disconcerted. The lady was completely at a loss how to interpret his unaccountable deportment.

"Come, sir," she continued; "my word for it, you have been deceived. Sir William, I am painfully aware, has enemies—"

"Of which number, may it please your ladyship," hastily interrupted Mr. Asburton, "I am not, nor ever have been. On the contrary, Sir William has had my warmest sympathy in the trying ordeal through which it has been his lot to pass. By the faith I profess, I freely and frankly accept the assurance you have given me of his good will, and beg you will say as much to him. In addition, I have to request that you will deliver this letter into his hands."

With which words he drew from his breast a sealed packet, and extended it to Lady Markham. It was her turn to be surprised.

"From yourself, Mr. Asburton?" she inquired.

"No, my lady; I received it this morning under cover from Glasgow, and was in the act of sending it to the Castle by a servant when this alarm was raised."

"The handwriting is not familiar," said the lady musingly, as she examined closely the superscription; "you know the writer, of course."

The grave gentleman could not forbear smiling to see how her womanly curiosity was piqued.

"Intimately well, your ladyship," he replied; "we are near of kin; yet no two people could have led more different lives."

"In what respect, pray? Has this person's been a very bad life?"

"A very sad one, my lady," said Mr. Asburton, seriously; "would you like to hear the story?"

"By all means," responded Lady Markham, eagerly. "Pray be seated, Mr. Asburton," leading the way as she spoke to a bench under a neighboring tree, and setting him the example. The gentleman's manner had undergone a decided alteration. Although still precise and formal, it was no longer distant and reserved. Evidently he was nothing loth to gratify the lady's desire. After a pause, in which he seemed to be collecting his thoughts, he proceeded.

"With your ladyship's permission I will begin with a short account of myself; albeit there is naught of especial interest in my uneventful career farther than it is connected with the writer of that letter. In early infancy, by the death of both parents, I was left an orphan to the care of a paternal aunt, who lived not many miles distant from the town of Whitehaven. It was my father's latest injunction that I should be reared in the faith in which he lived and died, and, accordingly, I was sent abroad to the college at St. Omer, in

company with the priest who had been my father's chaplain. Here I led a life of strict seclusion, and was kept in profound ignorance of what was taking place in the political world. Three years had passed, when one day I was surprised by a visit from my uncle. From him I learned for the first time of the ill-advised expedition of Prince Charles Edward. He was in it and had shared the fate of his leader, narrowly escaping with his life. He was a man of an ardent and impetuous temper, apt to be hurried by his feelings into such a rash enterprise. Too late he discovered his mistake. He was now all anxiety about his family, and nothing would satisfy him but that Father Eustace (such was the name of my tutor) should go at once to England for news of them. In a little while he returned; but the report he brought only increased my uncle's uneasiness of mind. He resolved to return home at every risk, nor could the remonstrances and entreaties of Father Eustace dissuade him from his desperate purpose. He consented, however, to disguise himself in the semblance of the good priest. In this way he managed for some time to elude detection. At length his secret was made known to the authorities through the treachery of a trusted servant. He was pursued and taken prisoner, after a fierce resistance, in which he was abetted by his son, a lad of fifteen."

"Something of this I have surely heard before," exclaimed Lady Markham hastily, interrupting the narrator; "the gentleman's name was—"

"Francis Delmay," said Mr. Asburton, seeing her hesitate.

"Ah, I remember; he was among the number—" again she paused.

"Who were murdered in the name of justice," said Mr. Asburton, with deep and bitter feeling.

The lady vainly strove to prevent a shudder as she averted her gaze from his. "And the boy; what became of the brave boy?" she asked, in low and tremulous accents.

"In the mêlée," replied Mr. Asburton, "a man was killed—the same wretch who had sold his master's life for a price. Suspicion pointed to the son as the avenger, whether truly or not, I am unable to tell. A reward was offered for his arrest. Nevertheless he made good his escape from the country, and found a secure retreat from hie enemies. Of his subsequent history one person alone is fully cognizant—his mother. I only know for certain that he yet lives, and has made me the medium of communication with Sir William Markham, for what purpose that letter must explain."

"Then you cannot give me a hint of its contents?" said Lady Markham, whose features, in spite of her efforts to conceal it, showed a faint shade of disappointment.

"I have imparted to your ladyship everything I know on the subject," replied Mr. Asburton, rising as he spoke. "I regret that the information is so meagre. Permit me now to take my leave of you, as I see my little runaways are in readiness to go."

Regaining her wonted manner, in which gentleness and dignity were so happily blended, Lady Markham rose from her seat, and, extending her hand to her visitor, "Good bye, Mr. Asburton,"

said she; "now that the ice is broken, I hope to see you often at the Castle."

"Your ladyship is very kind," responded the gentleman with emotion, and making a profound obeisance, he turned and followed his little charges, who had already taken their places in the boat.

Lady Markham stood looking after them until they were out of view, when she slowly, in meditative mood, retraced her steps towards the Castle. On the way a servant accosted her. "Sir William has returned, my lady," said he.

"Where is he?" she eagerly asked, her eloquent features radiant with joyous surprise.

"In the library, my lady," replied the man.

She hastened forward, and next moment was clasped in her husband's arms.

CHAPTER VI.

THE elder Sir William Markham held the theory of Lord Chesterfield that you may train a youth of average capabilities into any kind of a man you desire, and his ideal of perfect manhood agreed in the main with that of his celebrated exemplar and archetype. Thus he tried the experiment fully on his oldest son and heir, who, bearing the same name, was as a matter of course, entitled to the virtues of his incomparable parent. The way did not suit the boy, and he sulked and rebelled at every step. The more inflexibly harsh the paternal discipline, the more stubborn was the resistance; Greek had met Greek, and the tug of war came when the young man, having finished his course at Cambridge, went up to London to take his degrees in fashionable society. He had no notion of becoming a fine gentleman after the Chesterfieldean pattern. He loathed that career which was mapped out for him on his father's chart, and heartily despised the company he was forced to keep in that limbo of folly, where genius and talent played hypocrite and sycophant, and everything was hollow deception,

sham pretence and abandoned profligacy. Towards this depraved microcosm, "the west or worst end of the city," his bearing was invariably haughty and disdainful; no arts of flattery or persuasion could induce him to mingle in its ignoble pursuits. Subjected to this insufferable tyranny, with no opportunities or means of indulging the natural sympathies of his heart, he was fast growing to be morose and cynical, and doubtless had he been condemned to breathe the same atmosphere indefinitely, he would have become in time a confirmed misanthrope. There was one bright and blooming spot in the blackened waste of his frustrated inclinations. While at college he had contracted a well-placed attachment for the amiable and accomplished daughter of a poor clergyman, resident in a neighboring parish, and his love, though nourished in secret, was the silver lining of the cloud which overhung the sky of his youthful hopes.

In the midst of the unnatural contention his father died, and as soon as the last note of the *Miserere* was chanted, and before the funereal hatchments were dry, he posted down to Cambridgeshire for his bride and conducted her to Markham Castle. Here the sins of his father were visited heavily upon him. The neighboring gentry had not forgotten the harrowing scenes which followed the outbreak of '45,—scenes in which the late baronet had borne a conspicuously hateful part. It was, therefore, not surprising that his son should meet with a cold reception from them, and should become the mark of studied incivilties. On every hand his overtures of reconciliation were repulsed

with rudeness and contumely; his motives aspersed; his sincerity impugned. This treatment was sufficiently galling to his pride, and a man of less resolute spirit would have abandoned the struggle in despair, withdrawn from society and shut himself up in scornful seclusion. But the present Sir William Markham was in essential traits the exact antithesis of his father. Possessed of great force and decision of character, he was at the same time large-hearted, open-handed, brave and generous. His early training and subsequent experience of life, had not to any extent exacerbated his temper or acidulated the natural kindliness of his disposition. Sprung from a proud-spirited race, he was ever prompt to resent the slightest intentional affront to his dignity and social rank. But while he uniformly exacted from his equals the full amount of deference, courtesy and respect which belonged to his station, his intercouse with the lower orders was particularly distinguished for its unaffected frankness, graceful urbanity and engaging affability. At heart, he keenly realized the intense bitterness of feeling against his father among all classes of his neighbors, and was moreover painfully convinced of the justice of the general verdict upon his conduct. The effect of this consciousness was to stimulate his exertions to obliterate the memory of those atrocious persecutions and to reinstate his house in the old time regard of the community. It was a difficult and delicate undertaking, which required for its accomplishment a rare combination of firmness, patience and address. Yet he came out more than conqueror in the end.

Not only had he seen the enmities and heart-burnings which his father's unhappy career had provoked laid to rest in the grave with their author, and the ancient influence and prestige of his family restored, but he won the great prize of his ambition, a seat in Parliament conferred upon him by the spontaneous action of the people. In that body he gained distinction as a ready and forcible debater, as well as a wise, moderate and sagacious counsellor. On most subjects that divided parties he allied himself with Chatham and Burke, and was notably fearless and outspoken in advocacy of the rightful claims of the American colonies.

But although Sir William Markham had succeeded in obtaining the general good-will of the community and in advancing his fortunes to the full measure of his aspirations, he had made dangerous enemies in another quarter. He had been active and unrelenting in the suppression of lawlessness and crime, then unusually prevalent, and from long impunity, grown reckless and defiant. The country along the borders was invested with bands of outlaws and desperadoes, who took advantage of the disjointed condition of affairs to ply their nefarious vocations. Robberies on the highway were daily occurrences, murders were not infrequent, while every species of illicit trafficking in contraband merchandize was carried on in flagrant contempt of the authorities. To the condign punishment of these evil-doers the baronet devoted himself with uncommon vigor and determination. He was especially instrumental in breaking up a notorious gang of smugglers, who had repeatedly foiled

the best laid schemes of the custom-house officials. On this occasion his zeal cost him dearly enough. Several of the band managed to escape, their leader among the rest. Shortly afterwards the baronet was made to feel their vengeance in a terrible manner. His little boy, the heir of his house, just two years old, was mysteriously stolen and carried away, whither it was impossible to discover, though search was made in every direction. The stroke was the more poignant because of its cruelty to the wife he so tenderly loved; but she, in turn, for his sake, bore the grievous affliction with amazing fortitude. At first it was surmised that the abduction of the child was a device to extort money; but when in the lapse of years nothing was heard of him, his parents lost all hope of ever seeing him again. Meantime other children were vouchsafed to them, and the care of these had the effect to soften and assuage their grief for the loss of their first-born.

But latterly another misfortune befell Sir William, which well-nigh cost him his life. One day last spring the head gamekeeper, in walking his round of the park, soon after sundown, discovered his master stretched on the ground, nearly senseless and weltering in a pool of blood. He proved to be dangerously wounded by a sword-thrust through the shoulder, and near by him was his own rapier, which had been broken off close to the hilt. When restored to consciousness, for some unaccountable reason, he refused to be interrogated about the affair. He soon got well of his injury, and, as he persisted in preserving the strictest reticence, the supposed attempt to assassinate him ceased

to be the subject of public excitement and indignation.

At the time spoken of in the preceding chapter, Sir William Markham had been absent some days on business.

"Well, darling," said he to his wife, when their greeting was over, "you cannot chide me now for want of punctuality. Here I am a whole day in advance of the time appointed for my return."

"And what is most important, your mission, I hope, has been accomplished," replied Lady Markham.

Sir William.—"To my entire satisfaction; but of that presently. You have had an adventure this evening, I am informed."

Lady M.—"An adventure? Yes, it was something of an adventure, who told you of it?"

Sir W.—"The children; that is, Emily, for of little Charlotte's prattle I could only make out that somebody had been drowned and come to life again."

Lady M.—"Then you have not heard of my extraordinary visitor."

Sir W.—"Visitors, you mean to say—the boys."

Lady M.—"And their father."

Sir W. (eagerly).—"Their father—Mr. Asburton—has be been here?"

Lady M.—"Yes, no less a person than our unsociable neighbor across the lake. It seems that we are indebted to the accident which befell his boys for the honor of his visit. You never told me that you and he had quarreled."

Sir W.—"For the reason, love, that I did not deem the matter of sufficient consequence to trouble

you about. There was an unpleasant passage between us; quarrel it could hardly be called. Soon after its occurrence he went away to France where I supposed him to be at present. It was all a misunderstanding, growing out of my unlucky rencontre with another person. What did he have to say on the subject?"

Lady M.—"Nothing, except to intimate pretty plainly that the enmity was wholly on your part. When I assured him that he was mistaken in supposing that you entertained the least unfriendly sentiments towards him, he was evidently extremely well pleased, and having been set at ease on that point, became quite communicative. I was not before aware that he was a nephew of Lady Delmay."

Sir W.—"Nephew by blood; but in conduct a most devoted son."

Lady M.—"She had a son?"

Sir W.—"So I have been told."

Lady M.—"What became of him?"

Sir W.—"That I have not been able to discover. It is a painful story, darling wife, part of that disagreeable past over which we had best draw the curtain of oblivion."

Lady M.—"Not so, dearest husband—things without remedy should be without regard, but we should not cease trying to redress the wrongs which have been done as long as there is reasonable hope of so doing."

Sir W.—"Spoken like your own noble, generous and devoted self. Without your constant, unfailing sympathy I should long ago have given way to despair. As it is, my efforts have assuredly not been

in vain. In Lady Delmay's case it was impossible to undo the wickedness which deprived her of her husband. What it has been in my power to do for her solace and relief has been done."

Lady M. (looking at him reproachfully, with swimming eyes).—"And you kept it a secret from me. In my opinion that was a very selfish way of doing good by stealth, not even permitting your wife to share in it."

Sir W.—"There you go, woman like, jumping at a wrong conclusion. The fact is, your ladyship, I had serious misgivings how my conduct should be viewed. They are a very proud, stiff-necked generation, full of bigotry and prejudice and apt to misconstrue the best meant actions. I have done what I conceive to be right, proper and just in the premises. How they will take it remains to be seen. If in good part, then you shall have the whole credit of it; if with bad grace, then—well, my shoulders are broad enough to bear the disappointment. Really, though, I am delighted to hear what you tell me of Mr. Asburton; it is a good augury."

Lady M.—"Yes, love, but we should not forget the sufferings these people have been made to endure, and should make due allowance for their exasperated feelings. Perchance this document may have some bearing on the subject."

She drew forth the letter which she had concealed in the folds of her dress and gave it to her husband.

"From Mr. Asburton?" he inquired hurriedly glancing at the address. Lady Markham shook her head. He opened it and read. Presently he gave a great start, turned pale and trembled with violent agita-

tion, while wonder and gladness were equally blended in his face. Mastering his emotion with a powerful effort, he read the letter through and without a word handed it to his wife, whose expressive features responded eloquently to the changes of his own. Had her woman's instinct divined the cause of the unspeakable joy which brightened the face of her husband? In no other way can be explained the marvellous self-possession with which she read the startling intelligence which the letter conveyed. It was short, and in these words:

ON BOARD BARK "KATRINE" AT THE BROOMILAW,
GLASGOW, October 11th, 1775.

HONORED SIR:—Circumstances have lately come to my knowledge in an unexpected manner, which make me painfully aware that I have done you grievous wrong both in thought and deed. The conviction would be a source of endless regret and misery, were it not in my power to make reparation for the injury. The child you have so long mourned for dead lives, is in good hands and has been tenderly and gently reared. In two months' time, God help me, he shall be restored to your arms. You have an enemy, Sir William; you bear the mark of his deadly purpose. I helped him to escape. He shall be delivered into your hands. That done, my conscience will be relieved of a heavy burden. To-morrow I sail for Virginia. Gratefully, your obedient servant,

DAVID DELMAY.

To Sir William Markham, Baronet.

Oh, the unselfish purity and depth of woman's love! She felt only as a mother could feel the shock of joy and gratitude unutterable. Yet in the impulse of supreme happiness her first thought was of her

husband. Smiling through her tears, her beautiful face beaming with angelic light, she threw herself on his breast and there poured out her whole heart and soul in divine sympathy with him. In this attitude they remained some minutes. At length, the baronet, in a voice of forced calmness, broke the holy silence:

"Your prophecy is fulfilled, my precious wife," said he; "the crowning blessing of heaven has fallen on your patient efforts. But there is something still left for me to do. Mr. Delmay's mistaken zeal must be frustrated. That letter is dated on the 11th of the month; to-day is the 19th, nothing preventing, the ship is now nearly half way to America. There is no time to lose; I must dispatch a messenger forwith in pursuit of her."

"Why not wait until she comes back to Glasgow?" asked Lady Markham, with newly awakened interest."

"No, no," replied Sir William, "that will never do. I must try and prevent this indignity to my cousin Edward for my own honor's sake. As you know, I have written to him that I freely and frankly accept the terms he has offered. Besides, his name is gazetted among a number of recent appointments of officers in the American army. He must not be brought here. I have it; Frederick is in London. I will write post-haste to detain him there. I am sure he will gladly undertake the mission for me. Meanwhile, I will myself hasten to Glasgow; find out what I can concerning the movements of the vessel and then proceed directly to London. Come, come, bestir, my bonny Kate, and help me prepare for my journey."

"Not to-night, love," protested Lady Markham; "surely you will not set out to-night?"

"In half an hour," replied the baronet, consulting his watch, "the courier will start for London; at early dawn I shall be on the road to Scotland. That is decided."

He had risen as he spoke, and bending down, kissed her tenderly. "It is hard to part from you, darling," said he softly; "but it cannot be helped; I'll not be long gone."

"Be not troubled for me, my husband," replied his brave wife, warmly returning his caress; "I am always happiest when you are with me; but never unhappy when we are separated by the command of duty. I await your pleasure."

Saying which, she took his proffered arm and they left the room together.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN his Excellency, the Right Honorable, John, Earl of Dunmore, the last and sorriest of his Britannic Majesty's Lieutenant-Generals of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia, and Vice-Admirals of the same, fled in conscience-stricken dismay from the vengeance of an outraged people, he took refuge with his family and minions on board of the *Fowey*, man-of-war, at Yorktown; there being no other protecting bulwark nor tower along the steep to afford him shelter and protection from the terrible storm his dastardly folly had evoked. Thence he transferred the seat of sovereignty and, as became a valiant son of the proud mistress of "Neptune's salt-wash," he lorded it majestically over the Virginian Mare Internum, thundering wrathful anathemas at his rebellious subjects, plundering reparian sheep-folds and poultry-yards, and doing all manner of base and contemptible acts of cruelty and revenge, which have handed his name down to everlasting detestation as the meanest of the infamous tools of a demented despot—like master, like man. But we cannot find it in our hearts to be severely

critical of John Bull's people in the matter. It greatly mollifies the asperity of our resentment towards our loving cousins for sending us such a shabby set of rulers, when we call to mind the kind and quality of their precious kings. Certainly we of this generation of free Americans have reason to be thankful to them in the present instance; for, in truth, the Grecian gift did prove a very treasure. They could not possibly have done more (shade of Dr. Johnson, forgive us the unintentional pun!) to precipitate the result so devoutly prayed for by all true patriots, had it been their deliberate purpose to drive the colonists to desperation and unite them in a compact phalanx of resistance to tyranny. *Finis coronat opus*—their loss was our great gain. Queen Mary, of bloody name and execrated memory, when dying, told somebody —her father confessor, most likely—that the word Calais would be found engraven on her heart. Similarly, imagination may trace the name of America written in flaming characters on the heart of that fatuous monarch George III, to whom England is indebted for the loss of her best possessions in the Western Hemisphere—a staggering blow to her high-blown pride, nathless the paradoxical Macaulay has endeavored to prove that it was a blessing in disguise.

Having tested his eminent fitness for military command and by his brilliant forays reflected additional lustre on the naval annals of his country, the doughty Dunmore in a little while gave it in charge to his trusty lieutenant, Squire, to prosecute the campaign on the water, and, establishing his

base of operations at the town of Portsmouth, placed himself at the head of a Falstaffian following of variegated ragamuffins, with whose assistance he ravaged and harried the defenceless region around the Dismal Swamp until his ruffianly proceedings were brought to a stop by the gallant *shirtmen* of Howe and Woodford.

In addition to its prominence as the headquarters of Dunmore's tatterdemalion army, Portsmouth now enjoyed the enviable distinction of being the temporary capital of the Old Dominion—an honor which had been conferred upon the town by an especial edict of the peripatetic governor, and one, too, it is proper to add, over which its patriotic inhabitants were never known to be inordinately vainglorious.

The gale we have described in a previous chapter was felt here in full fury, driving the shipping to shelter, until quite a fleet of vessels of various sizes and descriptions were seen riding at anchor off the town. One of these challenged particular notice. Although armed, it was plain from her outfit, appointments and build, that she was not in regular commission as a vessel of war, whilst in hull, rigging and spars, she bore no resemblance whatever to the heavy carriers of the sea which usually frequented these waters, and from which she differed as a race-horse differs from a steed of Flanders. Trim, taper, light and rakish, she might have passed for the model of one of those dashing wing-footed couriers which the enterprising merchants of Baltimore in a few years sent forth at their own risk and costs on the dangerous quests

of trade and traffic. To the eye of a nautical connoisseur, she had every mark of having been designed and fitted out for privateering purposes, or else for carrying on a contraband commerce with the Spanish Main in defiance of the recent orders in council.

In the state-cabin of this jaunty ship on the evening mentioned was a single occupant. Wrapped in a rich furred robe which completely envelopes his person, he sits in a reclining position on one of the lockers, with his head resting on his hand as if plunged in profound thought. His face is in the shadow of the lamp swinging above him, and is moreover concealed by the mass of long, straight brown hair which, released from control, hangs loosely about his head and shoulders. There is that about him which conveys the impression at a glance that he is a man of no mean mould, intellectually and physically, while the nervous twitching of the firm-set lips and the arm drawn so tightly across his breast as if pressing down some struggling emotion, as well as his general air of reverie and abstraction, betokens that there is a severe conflict going on in his mind and that he is exerting all his faculties of self control to subdue it. So absorbing is his occupation that he pays no regard to the furious gusts of wind which ever and anon smite the vessel, causing her to leap and bound, and tug at her cable, and sending handfuls of hailstones rattling down upon the sky-light. Nor does he hear the loud knock at his cabin-door until it has been thrice repeated with increased emphasis. At last he starts from his reverie and

calls out impatiently, "Come in," at the same time bending his stern gaze on the intruder. It is a servant in livery, who enters and stops abruptly as he encounters his master's imperious look.

"What is it, Charles?" inquired the gentleman, composing his disordered mien and moderating the severity of his tone.

"Mr. Saunders desires to know if he can see your honor," replied the man.

There were voices in the room outside. "Who is with him?" asked the gentleman, without moving from his recumbent position.

"It is a strange man, a sailor from his looks, an' it please you, sir," said Charles.

The gentleman sprung up with sudden interest, throwing off the robe and displaying the tall, commanding figure of a man in the vigorous prime of life. "Admit them, Charles," said he. At a sign from the servant there entered the skipper, a brisk, active, manly young fellow, and with him none other but our old friend, Mike Burke, who, in his frieze coat, fox-skin cap and long, shaggy beard, resembled a huge good-natured Newfoundland dog.

"Well, Saunders," asked the gentleman—who had regained his self-possession—in a half-familiar manner, "who have you here? A pilot, I hope."

"Please you, Master Frederick," replied the skipper—or rather first mate, for such was his real station—with a dignified and respectful salutation, "he is an old acquaintance, whom I accidentally picked up at the tavern in the town a while ago. He brings important news of the ship we are in

search of; she did not give us the slip as we feared she might do when the storm last night drove us to harbor; but is now up a river with a barbarous name hereabouts making up her cargo."

"How came this fellow by the intelligence? What river does he mean?" asked the Master (we adopt the title his men gave him), in a quick, decisive voice, his piercing grey eyes looking from one to the other until they settled sternly upon Mike, who stood twirling his cap around his finger and cocking his weather-eye at the sky-light with a droll expression of discomfiture and chagrin.

"Come, Mike," said the mate, encouragingly, "tell his honor how it all happened; spin away; you were a capital hand at a yarn when we sailed with Captain Byron."

"Och!" said Mike, with an irrepressible burst of enthusiasm, forgetting where he was. "An' sure enough, ye were the cap'n's cabin-boy thin, Jemmy Saunders, and a mischievous jackanapes in the bargain, an' now ye're e'en most a cap'n yerself. Begorra, them was divartin' times. Arrah, now just to think, it's many a time I've seen the lubberly spalpeen rolling in the lee-scuppers and floundering about the ship like a fish out of water, and here he is again, a picture of the Admiral hisself. Ax' pardon, yer honor," pulling his top-knot to the Master, the sternness of whose gaze had given place to a half amused expression; "but it does my heart good to fall in wid an old messmate, and me and Jemmy Saunders has sailed round the world in the same ship."

"Quite right, my good fellow," replied the gen-

tleman, "the sentiment does you much credit; but come, now, time is pressing; tell us about the vessel in the fewest words you can command."

Giving his forelock a preliminary jerk, Mike launched into his story in characteristic style, half-comical, half-pathetic, and altogether Irish, and by no means as concise as a log-book or a bill of lading. The gist of the matter was that Mike's forlorn expedition had been undertaken for no other object than to render "Misther Dick" a kindly service. On getting home from his successful pursuit of the thieves who had stolen his boat, he had heard from his wife a confused and alarming account of the kidnapping affair. Soon after he left the good dame had flown into a violent spasm of excitement at his unaccountable behavior, and repaired to her friends at Bonhill for consolation and advice. Here she picked up enough of the news afloat to satisfy her that something terrible had happened, and, piecing together the materials she had gathered, she fabricated a lively and harrowing story, wherewith she regaled her husband after she had sufficiently berated him for his cruel treatment of her that morning. From her melodramatic version two facts only were clear to Mike's comprehension; which were, first, that Misther Dick was greatly put out and vexed in spirit; and secondly, that Captain Dent was generally believed to be at the bottom of the trouble. Now, Mike had a sneaking affection for his old captain, and, albeit circumstances were pretty strong against him, he could not believe that he had all of a sudden turned "bloody pirate," for such Misthress Mur-

chieson's tale represented him to be. There must be some mistake. At all events, he would not condemn Captain Dent before he had heard the truth of the matter from his own lips. He could not rest easy in his mind for thinking about it; so, when night came on he determined to go in search of the *Katrine*, knowing that she had put into the Rappahannock river and for what purpose. Watching his chance, he gave his vigilant spouse the slip, and set off alone in his boat on his wild-goose errand. It was comparatively calm when he started, and the moon was shining brightly in the clear sky; but, by the time he reached the mouth of the Potomac, the wind had freshened into a gale and was blowing straight across the bay. He tried in vain to make head against it; he was driven from his course, and his little jolly-boat, becoming entirely unmanageable, began to dip her gunnels and to take in water by the pailful. Fearful of being swamped or capsized, he unstepped his mast and suffered his sail to go by the board, thereby surrendering himself to the merciful pleasure of the elements. In this helpless fashion, after buffetting with the winds and waves for twelve long hours, he was fortunately discovered and taken in tow by a fishing-craft and brought to Portsmouth, where, half-drowned, hungry, tired and in a generally miserable and woe-begone pickle, he was accidentally stumbled on by Saunders, engaged in drying his clothes and comforting his inner-man by the kitchen fire in the tavern.

"What are the *Katrine's* sailing qualities?" asked the Master, when Mike had related his miscellaneous adventures.

"On a wind, plaze yer honor," replied the old sailor, "she can howld her own wid the loveliest craythur that floats, an' Captain Dent is the man to make the most of every capful that is blowin'."

"Then, Saunders," said the Master, "we haven't a second to lose; she may yet give us the slip if we are not expeditious. How is the weather?"

"Rougher than I could wish, sir," replied the mate; "but the wind has hauled a point or two since sunset, and we can make pretty fair headway up the bay."

The gentleman again abruptly accosted Mike. "This Captain Dent's turning kidnapper does not seem to affect your opinion of him, my man."

The old sailor grinned ruefully. "Belike, your honor, it was the orders of his betters. A sailor must obey orders if it breaks owners; eh, Jemmy Saunders?"

Saunders nodded assent; seeing his Master's drift, he had put on a serious countenance.

"The poor Frenchman, as you say, is not likely to fare well in such hands?" continued the gentleman.

"I can speak for the cap'n, yer honor," replied Mike, warmly; "he must be a changed man entirely, if he would harm a hair of the gentleman's head."

"How do you know he is a gentleman, sirrah?"

"Faith, yer honor, it's sorrow to the tongue o' Misthress Murchieson an' he is not a gentleman; fer didn't she say he was goin' to marry the Squire's beautiful dater?" And Mike shot a reproachful glance at the young skipper.

The Master beckoned Saunders aside, and they

remained some minutes in whispered conference. Presently he turned and addressed Mike, smiling pleasantly as he did so.

"Well, my good fellow, you shall not miss your chance to get back to the old country after all. You have only to do my present bidding, and then Captain Dent can take charge of you."

The ruse had its effect. There was no longer room to doubt the old sailor's perfect honesty. Whatever hankering he might have for the seafaring life he had quitted, he had certainly no intention of running away from his friends. "The ould counthry!" he exclaimed, twisting his features into a woful grimace, "Och, yer honor, an' what will Misther Dick and Misthress Murchieson say to me when I come back, and, for the matter of that, how am I going to get back?"

Both Saunders and the Master laughed heartily. "Never mind, my good man," said the latter, "I only jested with you. What I really desire of you is to take us where we can find the other vessel, and then we will let you return to your friends. See that his boat is taken aboard, Saunders; I have no further orders for you, except to make all dispatch and not to call me up until there is absolute occasion for doing so; I must have rest."

"Be dad," said Mike, with a quizzical leer at the mate, as the latter slapped him playfully on the back and gave him a boost up the companion-way; "and sure, it's drameing, I am, that I am goin' to sail wid Jemmy Saunders in the *Flying Dutchman*."

And well might the old sailor fancy he was

dreaming; for his waking vision was never before greeted by such an inspiring spectacle as a few moments later the *Atalanta* presented, bounding over the billows under a strong quarter breeze, as though she really felt in every fibre of her beautiful frame

> The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,
> That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way.

Duly installed in his office of pilot and plied with an extra allowance of genuine poteen, he kept the forecastle in such an uproar with his marvelous reminiscences that there would have been little need of the boatswain's whistle in case of alarm to pipe the crew to quarters. What particularly surprised him was to see that the men were all either young or middle-aged, and he was still more astonished when Saunders gave him to understand that the vessel belonged to the Master, who was as rich as a Jew, and that the matter of wages was no consideration if the lads behaved themselves.

Nothing occurred during the night to require the Master's presence on deck. An hour or so before the dawn they were off the mouth of the Currito-man. A black cloud obscured the light of the moon. Mike said there was plenty of water inside, but he could not distinguish the landmarks in the darkness. So they reefed their sails and stood off and on waiting for daylight. Meantime Saunders took the liberty to call the Master up for more specific instructions. Just as he made his appearance the lookout announced a sail in sight, close aboard, on the starboard bow. The mate leveled his glass in that direction.

"It's a large schooner," said he, "and there, she has gone about like a whirligig and is running away as if the devil were at her heels. I would like, for the fun of the thing, to send a shot over her head."

"Blaze away, then," replied the Master; "it's the quickest way to call her back."

In a trice the pivot-gun amid-ships was run up, manned and loaded. "Aim high," said Saunders to the gunner. "Fire!" The report, which followed, was echoed from bank to bank of the river, and reverberating far and wide over the adjacent country, caused many a sleeper to start up in fear and trembling at the terrible thought that Dunmore's war-dogs were let loose upon them. We have seen what effect it had on our friends aboard the *Endeavor*.

CHAPTER VIII.

"DO you know that craft, Mr. Burke?" asked the Master of the *Atalanta* of the old sailor, who was peering through the dusk with all his might at the schooner.

"My eyes are none of the best, plaze yer honor," replied Mike; "but I have a notion there is something familiar like in the cut of her jib."

"Take a look at her through this," said the Master, handing him the spy-glass, which he no sooner brought to bear, than he exclaimed, "Sure enough, it is Misther Ballington's *Indiver*—an' may I never see the Blessed Virgin in glory, ef it ain't Misther Dick—the gentleman in the boat."

"Eh?" said the Master, gazing with keen interest at the party, "there are three persons in the boat, which of them is your friend Mr. Alloway?"

"The big gentleman, yer honor, as is taking his seat in the stern-sheets, him as Misthress Murchieson calls Golier, an' a giant he is by the same token—most like one of them ugly haythens we came across in Pattagony—leastways in stater, I mane." "Oh, the Irish giant," said the Master, laughing; "who are the other two? You don't

know them—well you can go below and turn in until you are wanted again."

Mike was going to protest against being summarily sent to bed at so interesting a conjuncture, but catching the Master's eye, he saw that the command was intended to be obeyed without further questioning. When he was gone, the Master stood watching the boat until it came alongside, then he descended to the cabin.

"Charles," said he to the servant, "go up and tell Mr. Saunders to send Mr. Alloway to me; he can take charge of the other persons. This is indeed a fortunate turn of affairs," he continued, speaking to himself as the man departed on his errand; "this meeting relieves me of a deal of trouble. That document, now where did I put it, ah, I remember."

From a drawer in the buffet he drew forth a paper, and seating himself at a table in the middle of the room, awaited the execution of his order.

If Mr. Richard Alloway had reason to be agreeably impressed by the civil terms of the invitation he had received to repair on board of the *Atalanta*, he had greater cause for surprise at the reception which greeted him as he entered the cabin. Rising from his seat, the Master advanced to meet him, and extending his hand, said in a tone and manner at once courteous, frank and confiding, "I have the honor to address Mr. Richard Alloway?"

"That is my name, sir, and you, I presume, are Captain Markham," replied Dick, taking the seat which was politely tendered him.

"So my crew call me when on shore; aboard ship

I am the Master. I owe you an apology, Mr. Alloway, for overhauling you so rudely. Permit me to explain. I was in want of certain intelligence which I thought it likely you could give me, and therefore took that effectual method of stopping your flight. Of course you took my vessel to be one of his Excellency's gunboats."

Alloway frankly confessed that he did entertain such a reasonable supposition.

"You will be gratified then to learn that your fears are groundless. I have naught whatever to do with Lord Dunmore's affairs; my business here is wholly of a private nature. Waiving ceremony, I have in the first place to thank you for the lively interest you have manifested in a kinsman of mine, who has been very foully wronged."

"Edward Markham—is he here on this ship?" exclaimed Dick in utter bewilderment, no less at hearing his own name so pat on the tongue of a total stranger than at the connection in which it was pronounced.

"No, he is not here," replied the Master, apparently unconscious of Dick's look of blank astonishment; "but you, Mr. Alloway, I have reason to believe, can tell me where he is to be found."

Alloway reflected a moment, his usually clear and collected wits were for the nonce in a state of intricate confusion.

"I have a friend who came with me, Captain Markham," said he; "he is equally conversant with the subject of your inquiry. May I beg that he be made a party to this interview."

"Your request is quite proper," replied the Master. "You refer to the elderly personage."

"No, sir; it is the young gentleman of whom I speak," said Dick. "He! why he is a mere stripling to all appearance," exclaimed the Master. "He is scarcely twenty years old," replied Dick, warmly; "but for all that, you will find him to be a man in the truest sense of the word."

"Damon and Pythias," said the Master smiling, and putting his mouth to a speaking-tube which communicated with the mate's room, he ordered him to conduct Mr. Alloway's friend to the cabin.

Carleton was no less astonished than Dick had been by the scene which awaited him there; but he had the address to conceal his emotion under the guise of easy dignity and composure of mien, which showed that his friend's confidence in his resources was not misplaced. The formality of introduction passed, the Master said: "I was asking your friend here, Mr. Carleton, to tell me what has happened to my kinsman, Edward Markham. I now repeat the question."

Encouraged by Harry's presence, Dick, without further hesitation, related with graphic distinctness all the particulars of the kidnapping affair, as well as the revelations which had come to light concerning the victims. The Master listened to the story with grave and earnest attention.

"It was a bold stroke, your attempted rescue, gentlemen," said he, when Dick had concluded his narrative. "Likely enough you would have been successful but for the unexpected obstacle you have encountered. From your account, Mr. Alloway, this Captain Dent, as you call him, has acted entirely on

his own responsibility. Yet he must have a motive, and a strong one too, for his audacious behavior."

"That goes without saying," interposed Carleton, "most human actions spring from some motive good or bad. In the present case we have been unable to discover it, that's all. I have no acquaintance with Captain Dent, but from my friend's description of him I should as soon expect the sea to give up its dead as for him to divulge the motive of his conduct in this matter."

"Yet he has divulged it," said the Master, "to one person at least, and it is not a bad motive either, as you, Mr. Carleton, will readily admit, when you have heard the particulars of this hazardous adventure. In the outset I will state that the person in whose behalf it was undertaken is my brother, Sir William Markham. From him I received—" He was interrupted by a shrill whistle proceeding from the speaking tube. "Pray excuse me a moment, gentlemen, that signal requires my presence on deck," saying which he went out abruptly, leaving the amazed friends to discuss the strange turn events had taken.

"Well, Harry," said Dick, drawing a long breath, "I am fairly dazed; it all looks like a tale of the Arabian Nights."

"Or an Indian summer day's dream," responded Harry; "it's lucky for us that our captor does not prove to be one of his Lordship's corsairs, in that case we should have been in a lively predicament; there's no telling what that gruff old Scotchman would have said about us to save his own bacon."

"Lucky, indeed," said Dick; "I made sure we were in an ugly scrape; relieved on that score, the wonder now is how in the world he came to know who I was."

Harry.—"Did you not tell him?"

Dick.—"Not a word; he saluted me as familiarly as though I were an old acquaintance, and stranger still, he knew exactly what it was we were so much concerned about."

Harry.—"He must surely have fallen in with the *Katrine*."

Dick shook his head. "That is not the least probable; if he had he would not have questioned me so closely; besides he could not in that way have learned anything of our movements."

Harry.—"One thing is certain, he was privy to the kidnapper's design. Sir William Markham's brother, eh? It's just nothing more nor less than one of those delightful little family feuds which are an every-day occurrence in our merry motherland. I am truly sorry for your fair cousin, Dickon; she'll not see her captive knight again in a hurry. Well, well, there is nothing like patience, old boy, as I have often inculcated—'of all the virtues 'tis the nearest kin to heaven.' So far, so well. Here we are sound and hale, in the snuggest and most comfortable quarters, courteously entreated and hospitably entertained. What more could we desire?"

Dick.—"'When I was at home I was in a better place.' There I am sure I could get something to eat; I am as ravenous as a wolf."

Harry.—"That comes of your fasting yesterday. Catch me taking other people's troubles so much

to heart. I am not the least bit hungry; had you said thirsty—halloo! what's that?"

"Anchored, by Jove," exclaimed Dick; at the same moment the man, Charles, made his appearance, bringing in a smoking bowl, whose peculiar aromatic fragrance plainly discovered the nature of the ingredients it contained. This he deposited on the sideboard, from which receptacle he next produced sundry bottles of wine. Then having disposed the table in due form, he went out again and presently returned with a large tray on which was a tempting array of viands of various sorts, constituting on the whole an elegant and substantial repast. Alloway greeted these preparations with signs of undisguised satisfaction, his eyes fairly sparkling with pleasure. "The Master is engaged, gentlemen," said the man, when he had completed these preliminaries; "he begs that you will consider yourselves perfectly at home in his absence."

"Your master is very kind," replied Dick, promptly availing himself of the invitation; "we pledge him our humble service. Capital punch, Harry; try a glass."

Harry.—"No, thank you; this claret is strong enough for me. I'll have a bottle at table, if you please," to the servant.

Dick.—"There's no accounting for tastes; I would not give a glass of punch like that for the entire vintage of France. Now, 'let good digestion wait on appetite,'" with which appropriate grace he took a seat at the table and fell to with an energy and heartiness which made the eyes of the staid major-domo dilate with astonishment.

The presence of the servant acted as a restraint upon the freedom of their conversation, and the meal proceeded in silence, broken only by an occasional trite remark. When it was over and the debris were cleared away, "Now," said Dick, stretching his burly form to full advantage, "I am ready for anything that comes along; nothing so demoralizes a man as an empty paunch. What makes you so serious all of a sudden, Harry?" "I was turning over in my mind"—his reflections, whatever they might have been, were cut short by the entrance of Captain Markham. "It has fallen dead calm, gentlemen," said he, as he resumed his seat; "so I shall have the pleasure of your company some time longer. Recurring to the subject we were on, a word of introduction will not come amiss. My name is Frederick Markham. When only eight years old my father, who took no thought of his children, save my oldest brother, William, gave me in charge to a maternal uncle living in Barbadoes. Partly from inclination, but chiefly on account of disagreeable circumstances at home, my uncle had led a roving sort of life, being at one time a soldier of fortune, then a sea captain, and lastly an amphibious character, now sailor, then planter. Though a man of letters, he had a decided turn for speculation. In other respects he was active, energetic, temperate and self-denying. He was married, but childless. His wife came of an old French Huguenot family resident in the island. To her I am mainly indebted for my education, such as it is; my uncle, being frequently away on long voyages while I was growing

up, had little time to devote to domestic matters. I was turned eighteen, when he was brought home sick of a distemper caught while trading on the coast of Africa. During his long illness I had the sole management of his affairs, and acquitted myself so much to his satisfaction that when he got well he surrendered the helm entirely into my hands. The nature of the business kept me continually afloat, so that I became literally a dweller upon the sea. Strange as it may seem, during all this time I never visited England. The explanation is that on my once expressing a desire to do so my uncle showed so much displeasure that I refrained from mentioning the subject again until it was brought vividly to mind by reading in the English papers an account of the supposed murderous assault upon my brother. I was in Halifax at the time buying lumber to finish this very ship. Making known my wish to uncle, he not only acquiesced, but proposed that I should take the trip in the new vessel as soon as she was completed. She was built after a model of his own invention and he personally inspected every part of the work, so that the process was necessarily slow and tedious, and I did not arrive at London before the middle of September. I repaired at once to Markham Castle, our family seat, in Cumberland. Here I was welcomed by the brother from whom I had been separated so many years, with every mark of affection. He was entirely recovered from the injury he had received and made light of my allusion to it. He never once spoke of his assailant, and I naturally gave credence to the commonly reported version of the affair."

"I remember," said Alloway, "reading an account of it in the Virginia *Gazette*, copied from an English paper. It said he had been set upon by some unknown ruffian while walking in the park."

"So it was believed," continued the Master; "Sir William Markham is in one respect the most extraordinary man I ever met with; he never says a word to anybody, his wife excepted, about his own troubles, and I should have remained in profound ignorance of our painful family history but for a most fortuitous circumstance. After staying several weeks at the Castle, I returned to London to make preparations for my homeward voyage. I was on the eve of departure, when a messenger came in great haste from my brother to arrest me. Almost at the same instant a letter was handed me from my uncle with news of my aunt's alarming illness and imploring me to make all speed back to Barbadoes. In two days my brother arrived. He had been travelling day and night and looked jaded and care-worn. Yet his face wore its old expression of stern, inflexible resolution and his words were few and directly to the point. He came to demand my service in a matter in which he was peculiarly interested, but which concerned my honor as well as his own. He explained, and then for the first time I had a view of the skeleton in the house of Markham; then I knew why it was my good uncle had always forebore to speak of my father." He paused and suddenly rising, paced the cabin with hurried strides. Presently he stopped and resumed: "I forget myself, it is unnecessary for me to pursue the painful theme. Suffice it, that I am here in

time to prevent further mischief. Yet I ought even now to be at home. I shall never forgive myself if I tarry an instant longer than is absolutely essential to execute the purpose of my coming. This document, which I beg to commit to your hands, Mr. Alloway, will explain everything. It is addressed as you perceive to my cousin, in the care of Captain David Delmay, otherwise known as Captain Dent. It will fully accomplish what you desire. I must be gone from here as soon as possible. Hark, there is the signal again. What is it, Saunders?" he demanded.

"The wind is rising, sir," was the reply.

"Up with your anchor instantly," orderd the Master. "Come, gentlemen, we must part."

In the ante-room a fresh surprise awaited the friends, in the apparition of Mike Burke, his jolly features radiant with the combined inspiration of joy and poteen.

"Here is a waif I picked up below, Mr. Alloway," said the Master; "he claims to be your very 'fidus Achates,' and is in a peck of troubles for fear you might think he intended to run away. I assure you he has resisted every effort of mine, seconded by my mate, to seduce him from his allegiance to you and a lady he calls Mrs. Murcheison."

Harry glanced at Dick, and seeing that he was completely dumbfounded, made haste to cover his confusion and give him time to rally his senses from the effect of this unlooked-for blow.

"Why, this is indeed a fortunate escape," said he; "we had given you up for lost, Mr. Burke; my friend Alloway was quite inconsolable."

"Nothing of the kind, Mike," interrupted Dick; 'to tell the honest truth, old friend, I did you great injustice in my thoughts and am very sorry for it. There is my hand."

"Och, Misther Dick," replied the old sailor, as their hands met in a grip that made Carleton's fingers tingle to see," "an' did ye really believe that Mike Burke had clean gone and desarted intirely? Faix, it's no wonder after his stealing away like a dirty thief in the night."

"But it is an ill wind that blows nobody good, Mike," said the Master; "I was in sore need of a pilot, and the storm-king sent me the very fellow I wanted."

"Why, where is our Scotchman?" asked Carleton, when they were on deck looking around.

"Oh, I forgot to say," replied the Master, "that as he seemed ill at ease, I sent him back to the schooner. What do you know of him?"

"Nothing, except that he is mortally anxious to get back to the old country, like a sagacious rat running for life from a doomed ship, as he imagines."

"The Scotch are as prudent as they are proud," said the Master, with a meaning smile. "Mr. Hunter is not singular in his opinion. Of course there can be but one end to this disturbance."

"And that," said the fiery Carleton, the blood mounting to his cheek, "will be the realization of good King Alfred's dying wish."

"What was that?" inquired the Master.

"That every Englishman should be as free as his own thoughts," boldly responded Carleton, paying

no heed to Alloway's admonitory frown. Far from showing any displeasure, the Master looked with involuntary admiration at the youthful patriot, as he stood before him with lofty air and defiant mien, "all his country beaming in his face."

"Well, well," said he hastily, "every man must judge for himself what is his duty in such a case. I confess I have not studied the merits of the controversy, and if I had this is no time for us to dispute about it. Your boat is ready. Adieu, gentlemen; may we meet again under a happier star." Saying which he escorted them to the ship's side and saw them safely bestowed in Mike's boat, which the mate had furnished with a new set of oars and a large piece of sail cloth.

"That for your pilot fee, Mr. Burke," said the Master, tossing him a leathern pouch which chinkled as it fell at his feet. "In this bundle is something for the good dame, old ship-mate," said Saunders, giving him a parting salute as he sprang up the ladder. Mike was so disconcerted that ere he could find words to invoke the blessings of his patron saint on the generous donors, his boat had fallen a cable length astern of the vessel, which with all her sails set was speeding away at a rate which made good that boastful claim that her name implied. He sat for a moment gazing at her in mute admiration, then bending to his oars, he pulled vigorously for the *Endeavor*.

"What's to be done now, Dick," asked Carleton, when they were again on board of the schooner.

"Well," replied Alloway, "I suppose we shall have to wait here until the *Katrine* comes along.'

"Why not get under weigh and go to meet her?" demanded his friend, "she cannot be many miles off."

"You forget I am not captain here; we must see Braun—but what is that coming round the the point yonder—a sail, by Jove."

Carleton looked eagerly in the direction he pointed. "Psha!" said he, "it is only another schooner; see, she is standing this way."

"I know that vessel well," said Braun, who had joined them; "it's Mr. Gordon's *Charity*."

In a little while she was in speaking distance, running briskly before the wind, which had now freshened into a steady gale.

"Where are you from," shouted Alloway to the man at the helm.

"Up the river a piece," was the reply.

"Seen anything of the *Katrine?*"

"Gone; out o' the Capes by this time," vociferated the man, with a sweep of his disengaged hand to emphasize the words.

A thunder-clap could not have startled them more than this unexpected announcement. It literally took away Alloway's breath and ere he regained it, the vessel was out of ear-shot. Carleton was the first to speak.

"What do you think of that, Mr. Burke," said he, addressing the old sailor.

Mike was standing up in his boat in a listening attitude, having suspended half way the act of taking a chew of tobacco. In answer to Carleton's question, he gravely shook his head, twisted his features into a woefully ridiculous grimace, and,

biting off an immoderate slice of pigtail, betook himself to rolling up the sail cloth into a compact bundle.

"Tantalizing to say the least," continued Carleton, "all our trouble for nothing. Come, Dick, a truce to that doleful music; you cannot whistle your rover back, let's go home."

"But, I say, young gents," chimed in the skipper, "what am I to do with him?"

"Him! who?" said Dick.

"The party, you know, Mr. Richard, as I fetched here."

Dick.—"Oh, you mean that Scotchman; where the devil is he?"

Braun.—"Fast asleep in the cabin."

Dick.—"There's only one thing you can do with him, take him back where he came from."

Carleton (aside).—"Or throw him overboard."

Braun.—"But don't you think I ought to wake him up."

Dick (with some asperity).—"By no means. Come, hurry up and let's be off. Confound the stupid fellow, he is enough to provoke a saint."

"Especially when he happens to be in a very unsaintly humor," said the vivacious Carleton, "sorry come off this from our glorious expedition, Dickon; 'home without boots and in foul weather, too, how 'scapes he?'"

"You make a jest of everything, Harry," said Dick, in a tone of rebuke, "please forbear, this one time; I am in no vein to relish your pleasantry."

"Not another word will I speak, old fellow; I would not hurt your feelings for the world; I had no idea you took things so much to heart."

It was indeed a sore disappointment to Alloway. A moment ago the sky was bright with the promise of joy to the loved ones at Clifton and Bonhill; now it was overcast again—"all dark and barren as a rainy sea."

CHAPTER IX.

NEVER before had Lucy Graeme seen her father so strangely agitated as he was on getting back from Clifton. Strive as he might to assume his usual serene deportment, it was only too apparent that there was something of overmastering significance upon his mind. To his daughter's eager questioning he gave scarcely any heed, and it was merely to save his politeness that he hurriedly explained to Alloway the purport of the letter of which he was the bearer. Leaving the lovers in a state of vexatious uncertainty, he immediately sought his wife's chamber. She had been apprised of the misfortune which had befallen the Thompsons, and was anxiously awaiting his coming to learn the full particulars of the outrage. But she was little prepared to hear the astounding discovery which his conference with Mary Littleton had brought to light. There was no doubt of the fact, Col. Littleton's guest was her nephew, child of the brother whose supposed untimely fate she had never ceased to mourn. The proof was contained in a document which Mr. Graeme had brought with him. It was a narra-

tive, which had been written by the Abbé Julian Soulé at his pupil's request, for Miss Littleton's especial gratification. It's perusal will greatly assist the reader in unravelling the tangled web of this over true history.

"My first visit to America," said Father Soulé, "began in the spring of 17— and lasted five years. During that time I made the tour of the European settlements and explored divers regions where the light of civilization had not penetrated, one year making the voyage full of danger and hardship from the great lakes down the 'Father of Waters' to the sea. Thus I had gathered from every source within reach of human observation and inquiry, the valuable mass of materials which are embraced in my principal work. On my return to Europe I determined to put my book to press in Geneva, and while it was being published to fix my residence in that city. In going thither I turned aside to visit the old chateau in the mountains of Dauphiny where my father had sought an asylum in his last days from the turmoils of ambition and the cacking vanities of a licentious court, and which in the division of his wasted estate at his death was the only patrimony that fell to the lot of my eldest brother. Louis was two years older than myself. He had early embraced the profession of arms and at this time was serving in Pondicherry under General Duplieux. The place was in the most wretchedly ruinous and desolate condition, presenting a ghastly symbol of the havoc of war. It lay in the track of the Duke of Savoy's ruthless invasion of this defenseless region, and was

visited with more than ordinary brutality because of my father's participation in the campaigns of Catinot. The work of destruction had been fearfully complete, and not in the lapse of so many years had the hand of nature been able to conceal the frightful ravages of fire and sword. As I was wandering through this scene of desolation, indulging the melancholy reflections its appearance awakened, I was startled at hearing a piercing wail of distress, which seemed to proceed out of the ground at my feet. Glancing through an aperture in the broken wall, I discovered that the noise came from a child that had fallen into one of the many vaults underneath the ruins. Luckily the descent was rendered easy by a dense mass of creeping vines, and on being rescued the little imp proved to be more scared than hurt. He was a boy of some four or five summers, as I surmised, and in spite of the coarseness and squator of his raiment was the most beautiful little cherub that had ever blessed my sight. While I was engaged in quieting his fears a woman, accompanied by a half-grown lad, approached. At sight of me she stopped with a gesture of alarm, but apparently reassured by my looks she came forward and saluting me with respectful courtesy, clasped the child caressingly to her breast, at the same time scolding him roundly for having given her such a fright. She was poorly though decently clad, and bore upon her face such marked traces of sickness and suffering, as instantly excited my warmest sympathy. Entering into conversation with her, I learned that she was the wife of a poor herdsman who lived in a glen of the mountains not

far off. Their family consisted of five children of their own and this little waif, that came she knew not whence. His history was summed up in a few words. She was alone at the chalêt one morning with her children, when she was surprised by the entrance of a man—a stranger of such a wild and disordered appearance that at sight of him she was at first greatly alarmed. But his piteous manner and miserable plight soon aroused her womanly compassion, which increased when she saw that he carried in his arms a child whom he caressed and fondled in the tenderest manner. Of his language she comprehended hardly a word, and it was with difficulty that he made her understand that he wished her to take care of the child while he went on a short journey. After some hesitation she yielded to his vehement entreaties and he went away, never to return. She knew nothing more of the boy except that his Christian name was Edward. The woman's story greatly enhanced the interest which the sight of her lovely charge had inspired in my breast. I passed the night at an inn in a neighboring hamlet. In the morning I sent for the peasant and offered to relieve him of this unlooked-for burthen upon his scanty means. He readily assented to the proposal, on account of the precarious state of his wife's health, and thus I obtained possession of the dearest object of my life.

"Years fly past. Edward Soulé—by which name he has come to be known—is now in his fourteenth year and fully justifies the care and painstaking of his education. Up to this time he has been my constant companion and I have been his only pre-

ceptor. Observing the brightness of his parts, I determined to give him every advantage in my power to obtain the highest intellectual training. With that view he was placed at the college in Fribourg. There he made rapid advances in all his studies and surpassed even my sanguine expectations. His vacations were spent in travelling through Italy and visiting the principal cities of France and Germany. In these hours of relaxation, I sedulously refrained from exercising undue restraint upon his inclinations, leaving him free to follow the bent of his desires; although I took pains to give him the benefit of my large experience of the world and commerce with all sorts of people, and sought every fitting occasion to direct his attention to the general scene of misery, destitution, ignorance and vice which saluted him on every hand, and to point out the source of them, in the evils of bad government in Church and State. All the time my thoughts dwelt upon America as the future theatre of his ambition and I was anxiously looking forward to the completion of his scholastic education, when we would together depart for our ultimate destination.

"It was Edward's last year at Fribourg—the autumn of 17—I had gone from Paris, where I was then living, to meet him, and we were returning home by slow stages on foot. The first night after leaving Geneva we were constrained to seek accommodation at the dwelling of a family of the superior class of peasantry. It was situate in a glen of the mountains, in the midst of a region of unparalleled beauty and grandeur. In the room in which we slept, I was not a little surprised to find among

a number of other books, an odd volume in English of the works of David Hume; it was well-worn and profusely annotated. At breakfast next morning I inquired of my host how he came by this contraband property. He cheerfully explained the mystery. It belonged, he said, to a famous English traveller, who some years before had been an inmate and welcome guest at his home. He was a great student, constantly occupied with his books; yet a person of the gentlest and most winning manners and after his own fashion, of the most exemplary and pious habits. There was nothing in his nature which savored of misanthropy or æsceticism. It was not from aversion to the society of his fellows that he sought this lovely and sequestered spot, where he could pursue in calmness and quiet the investigations of science and philosophy on which he appeared to be so deeply intent. For a year or more the stranger, whose name was Metcalf, resided here devoting himself to his studies and mingling in the nameless, unnumbered joys of this simple-minded family. All of a sudden he fell alarmingly ill, betraying symptoms of distressing mental troubles. A physician was called in who enjoined absolute cessation from his accustomed work and to enforce the prescription, made the cotter secrete his lodger's books. Greatly to the joy of his humble friend, the patient after hovering for months on the brink of eternity, was recalled to life. Soon he grew well enough to travel again, and by the advice of the leech started on a tour through the northern provinces of Italy. From that day nothing had been heard of him.

"Pursuing our journey, on the following night we arrived at the famous convent founded by St. Bruno, which is known as the Grande Chartreuse. Here I was persuaded to tarry several days, in order to give Edward an opportunity to view the majestic scenery, the sight of which, said an English traveller, would awe an atheist into belief without the help of other argument. Happening to relate to the Vicar what had befallen us at the cotter's, I was surprised to obtain from him a further account of the interesting stranger. He was the same person, who some years ago had stopped at the Monastery, having been taken suddenly ill on the road. His disease assumed a violent form and his life was despaired of for weeks. He did not die; but his health was so terribly shattered that he was in an agony of dread lest he should not hold out to get to his home which was in America. His name was Richard Metcalf. Often in the delirium of fever, he raved wildly about a child which he imagined to be lost and the words Conrad, Campabello, were repeatedly on his lips. When he was recovering he revealed to the father who attended him, and who had since died, the matter which was weighing on his mind. The Vicar could not remember the particulars of the story, farther than that it related to an unfortunate English adventurer, in the service of the King of Naples, who went by the name of Campabello. He had secretly espoused a noble lady, connected with the ancient family of Torella. Her name was Constance Conrad. This marriage, when discovered, had given mortal offence to some of the lady's

relatives, to escape the vengeance of whom, Campabello, with his wife and child were forced to fly from Naples. Afterwards the lady had died under the most harrowing circumstances, and the man and child were believed to have sought refuge in the vicinity of Grenoble.

"These incidents did not impress me at the time as having any especial significance; but in a little while they were brought back vividly to my recollection. On arriving at Paris, to my inexpressible joy, I found Louis there. It was our first meeting after a separation of more than twenty years. To him I introduced my protegé, in whose favor he instantly became much interested and whose romantic history enlisted his warmest sympathy. There was something in Edward's appearance, he told me, which reminded him of a former associate—an English officer at one time in the retinue of Prince Charles Edward, in whose desperate undertaking Louis had taken part. The name of this person was Henry Markham, though here he had assumed that of Beauchamp. Louis tried to prevail on him to enter the French army, but he refused, saying that he could not consent to draw his sword against his countrymen. They parted; Louis going to India, where in a short while, he learned that his friend had gone to Genoa to seek his fortune under the banner of Charles the Bourbon, King of Naples. Beauchamp, Campabello, the names were identical. Then the stranger's mention of the lost child. I had long despaired of ever solving the mystery of Edward's birth, but here was a clue at last. I had a friend in Naples, one Nicolo

Spinelli, in whom I could implicitly confide. To him I wrote. In a few days his answer came. It fully confirmed the Vicar's tale of what happened to Campabello in Naples. Of the subsequent fate of the fugitives, Spinelli knew nothing. The date of their flight was no great while before the appearance of the man and child at the peasant's hut in Dauphiny. Could he have been Campabello, was the first question I asked myself. Next, I was puzzled to conjecture in what manner the American had learned their history. To find him, if living, was the only recourse left to me. In my perplexity I knew not which way to turn, when assistance come to me from an unlooked-for quarter. There chanced to be in Paris an English gentleman, with whom I had had some correspondence. His name was Asburton. To him I made known the matter which concerned me so deeply. He was well acquainted with the family to which Edward's father belonged, and gave me an interesting account of the troubles which had beset them. At his suggestion I went to London and sought an interview with Sir William Mavkham. His extraordinary behavior surprised and disconcerted me beyond measure. Before I had even stated the purpose of my mission, he broke out in a violent fit of unaccountable rage. 'I know what you are come for,' he exclaimed; 'you are the priest who found that spurious bantling; it is all an infamous Jesuit plot; begone instantly from my presence.' Thus insolently repulsed, I made haste back to Paris, having gained nothing by my visit to London, except the knowledge that Sir William Mark-

ham had become possessed of the secret which I sought to obtain. Could he have seen Mr. Metcalf? Of him I could get no tidings. The autumn was now far advanced. It had been arranged that Edward and I should depart for America early in the spring. But circumstances of a political character, which I am not at liberty to reveal, made it necessary for me to proceed forthwith to Philadelphia. Leaving Edward with Louis, I set out accordingly. What afterwards befell, he can best relate."

CHAPTER X.

IT was a busy morning with Mr. Murdoch McKittrick, head clerk of Ballantine & Co., at Yeocomico Store. Besides an unprecedented accumulation of letters, which demanded his attention, there was the yearly list of balances to be made up. And in addition to these weighty tasks, which belonged exclusively to his especial province, his supervision was required in assorting and getting into ship-shape, a large, bulky miscellaneous cargo of goods, wares and merchandize, which had been brought by the *Endeavor* from divers places up the river. With characteristic prudence and forecast, the shrewd senior partner of the firm had determined to lay in a large stock of such commodities of general use and demand, as would be exceedingly hard to procure in the probable event of an entire interruption of commercial intercourse with the outside world, and as a goodly number of his countrymen were anxious to close out their business before leaving for the old country, he availed himself of the opportunity thus afforded to purchase on advantageous terms, such articles as he wanted. Hence the extraordinary display of barrels, boxes, bales and bundles, to say

nothing of a straggling host of loose lumber, which blocked up every available space in the large tobacco warehouse, and which two brisk lads were trying to "arrange in order and dispose with grace" according to Mr. McKittrick's instructions. In his own person, that gentleman was a pattern of the neatness, method and system which he so rigidly inculcated upon his underlings. He had received a thorough training in the counting-house in Glasgow and was versed in all the details of the business. Invested with ample authority in the absence of his chief, he maintained the strictest order and discipline. His motto was a place for everything and everything in its place. He had no toleration for untidy and slovenly habits of dress or of careless and slip-shod ways. Though addicted to the prevalent vice of taking snuff, and continually dipping into the inkstand, not a speck, spot or stain of either could be detected on his immaculate plum-colored clothes, pearl grey stockings and cambric ruffles. Working vigorously away at his desk, with an occasional vigilant glance at the operations of his subalterns, he was fast clearing off the formidable score when he was suddenly accosted by his employer who had come into the counting-room unperceived by him.

"Well, Murdoch, hard at it I see; I hope you have gotten everything arranged so that I can set out for Williamsburg to-day?"

"What time do you start, sir?' asked the clerk.

"Early this afternoon," replied Mr. Ballantine.

"All will be ready, sir," said Murdoch.

"Anything of especial importance this morning?" inquired the merchant.

"I have contents of several letters, which require immediate answers," replied the clerk, taking up a bundle from the desk.

Mr. B.—"Well, let's hear what they have to say."

Murdoch (reads).—"Dr. Steptoe wishes to know the whereabouts of the negro man, Ayr, who was given him by Mr. Hugh Hamilton; also, whether his brother James can have the vessel to carry his overseer and family to Pohick."

Mr. B.—"Answer: Ayr is at Chaptico with Mr. Fergusson; the *Endeavor* is engaged to take a load of corn for Col. Lee from Kingcapsico to Stratford; after which, it is at Col. Steptoe's service. Which reminds me to say, send a message to William Callis to come to-morrow and overhaul the schooner; Braun says she needs some repairs bodily; also, make a note to charge Dr. Steptoe with £15, paid him for inoculating my wife and daughters and two negroes."

Murdoch.—"Inspector Crabb writes to ask whether he must charge you or Mr. Hague with fees for inspecting and shipping the lot of tobacco sent to Philadelphia in the *Friendship.*"

Mr. B.—"Answer: Charge me, and tell him to send us all the casks he has on hand."

Murdoch.—"Sheriff Rochester says he will meet you without fail at Naylor's hole, and desires you will bring list of persons who have paid you their levies and taxes; he could not serve the *ca sa* against Fisher, he having absconded for parts unknown."

Mr. B.—"The rascal; but I'll have him yet. Very well; what's next."

Murdoch.—"Mr. Benjamin Rust wants twelve hogsheads of rum; refers to Col. George Lee."

Mr. B.—"Humph! a cool request; we have just sent him six hogsheads; sorry to decline; orders ahead for all we can spare."

Murdoch.—"Here is memorandum of sundries to be gotten in Williamsburg (reads): Item—For Parson Smith 1 dozen prayer-books, 2 ditto testaments." (*Mr. B.*—"Don't forget to charge him with £1 10s. paid Collector Marmaduke in part of his salary as minister.") "Item—For Mr. John Turberville 1 stone-breast buckle set in gold, 1 pair silver-set knee-buckles, 1 calfskin that will make four pairs of shoes, have watch repaired." (*Mr. B.*—"Send him word about that riding chair; I have had several applications for it.") "Item—For Mr. Wardrobe, get school-books mentioned in list; pay his subscription for *Virginia Gazette*." (*Mr. B.*—"Charge him with cost of saddle, bridle and saddle-cloth, which he lost on that frolic in Northumberland, £2, 5s., and credit him with 12s. for schooling Major Broadwater's daughter.") "Item.—Mrs. Corbin, silk bonnet, garnet necklace, earrings and hunting-saddle for daughter Lettice. Item—Richard Coddun, tailor's goose, 10 yards claret cloth, 1 gross gilt buttons. Item—Miss Eskridge, curls, pounce box, hairpin, 3 yards pea-green ribbon and 1 open-worked silk purse. Item—Mr. John Washington, 3 sides harness leather, 10 gallons best Jamaica spirits, 1 English Dictionary." (*Mr. B.*—"Send Job to Bushfield in the morning for a hind

quarter of beef.") Item—Inquire of Mr. Ronald if if he has done anything in Major affair and of Mr. Ritchie how much you are bound with him on Fauntleroy's account. Is there anything else, sir?"

Mr. B.—"No, thank heaven; how much cash is there?"

Murdoch.—"86 Doubloons, 49 half Ioes, 131 pistoles, £59, 10s. in paper and £3, 4s. 8d. in small silver. There is, also, an order of James Fisher on 'Squire Lee for £110 in currency."

Mr. B.—"That is all I believe; no, I was near forgetting an important matter. I wish you to write to Mr. Buchanan per the *Royal Widow*, now at Annapolis, and request him to explain to Mr. John Bland why he did not receive the last consignment of tobacco; you know the cause of the accident; also, to see the underwriters about insurance on goods lost by the foundering of the *Rappahannock*. Now, give me the list of balances due at Nanticock, and then you may go on with yours. What have you got there, Jerry?"

The question was addressed to one of the young men we have mentioned, who entered with a crumpled piece of paper in his hand.

"It is a note for you, sir," replied the lad; "Mr. Claughton sent it, with a message that it had been brought to him last night through mistake."

Mr. Ballantine ran his eyes hastily over the queer-looking missive. "Eh? what's this?" he exclaimed, knitting his heavy brows in evident displeasure as he slowly repeated the contents. "Im-

portant and pressing business in Lancaster; learned by merest chance that vessel goes round; takes liberty of passage in her, as speediest and most agreeable way of getting there; hopes he will be pardoned; his friend, Mr. Alloway, accompanies him. Was ever the like of his impudence. Did you deliver my order to Braun, Murdoch?"

"I did, sir," replied the clerk.

"Positively on no account to permit another passenger to come on board of the vessel?"

"Those were the very words, sir."

"Discharge him on the spot, as soon as he gets back; that is, if he ever does come back; there's no questioning what mad freaks these wild callants are up to; ten to one they are captured. I am not surprised at that boy's conduct; but I did give Alloway credit for having at least a grain of discretion."

"What do you suppose is their intention, sir?" the clerk ventured to ask.

"Intention?" exclaimed Mr. Ballantine; "why, to meddle with what does not in the least concern them. It would serve them right if Dent takes them along with him to Glasgow. But who knows what danger they may run the vessel into? I would not have her miscarry for twice her value. Where is Job Halliday? I must send a note to Mr. Graeme about this matter?"

Murdoch.—"He has not been here this morning, I am afraid he is on one of his long sprees."

Mr. B.—"What, again, after the warning I gave him? Pay him his wages and let him go; truly,

I am beset—call Jerry; but never mind, I'll go myself to see Graeme. Put the papers and money up securely in one package and bring them to the house punctually at two o'clock."

With which parting injunction the indignant merchant left Mr. McKittrick to finish his task.

CHAPTER XI.

AS we have seen, the cruise of our madcap adventurers had turned out very different from anything which their liveliest imaginations had depicted. Meantime their friends at Bonhill were in total ignorance of their movements. In fact, Miss Lucy Graeme was sorely put out and she had good reason for the displeasure. Mr. Richard Alloway had failed to keep an imperative engagement. She had particularly requested him the day before at church to come over that afternoon with his friend, Mr. Carleton, and take his fair cousin and herself out riding. The diversion, she thought, would be good for Mary, and Dick agreed with her; his last words were that she might certainly look for them to be punctually on hand at the appointed hour. It was long come and gone; another and another had passed and still they were not come; nor had a message been sent to explain the seeming delinquency. All this time she and Mary had been patiently waiting in the parlor, equipped for the jaunt; the horses were ready saddled at the rack, and now the shadows from the hills were gradu-

ally creeping over field and forest and her last glance through the window gave reiterated assurance that her expectations were doomed to disappointment. Mary saw the cloud on her friend's face, usually so bright and wreathed with smiles; but she thought it best not to appear to notice her vexation.

"You had as well send the horses back to the stable, Lucy dear," said she; "something has happened to detain the gentlemen; cousin Richard is not wont to play truant. It matters little about the ride; that is no rarity to me; only I did wish to go and see Mrs. Thompson, poor woman; Archie's mishap has been a terrible shock to her."

Lucy.—"Does she know what Mr. Osborn said about it?"

Mary.—"O yes; papa informed Mr. Thompson yesterday. I have no patience with that old bear; he is perfectly odious; think of his still declaring that your cousin Edward is the cause of the trouble, after being told who he is."

Lucy.—"And you really believe that no harm has befallen him—cousin Edward?"

Mary.—"Certainly; why should I fear for him, well knowing that he and Captain Dent are on the best terms?"

Lucy.—"But why did he go away on the vessel?"

Mary.—"Who says that he did? Mr. Osborn makes no mention of him in his letter to your father."

Lucy.—"What, then, has become of him?"

Mary shook her head. "These are stirring times,

dear," she evasively replied; "we literally know not what a day or an hour may bring forth."

Lucy was evidently not satisfied with the haphazard explanation. She became on a sudden silent and thoughtful.

"Mamma," she presently said, "knew Sir William Markham when a child and was very fond of him—so unlike his father, she thought."

Mary.—"He is said to be a person of superior ability and is generally popular; indeed, there is nothing to his discredit that I am aware of except his unnatural behavior to your cousin Edward, for which I can imagine no palliation or excuse. He knew that every word he said was false, for it is perfectly evident from what Mr. Carleton told me the other night that he had heard in some way the whole unhappy story of your uncle's fate; doubtless from the late Mr. Richard Austin. Yet it would seem that he has repented of his conduct in some measure at last. Mr. Buchanan says in that letter which Mr. Carleton fortunately discovered, that he expressed unfeigned regret for what had happened and assured him that he would make ample amends for the wrongs he had done. Such a declaration, as your father remarked, coming from a man of his high character and standing, ought surely to relieve our minds of all apprehension of further serious trouble between these near kinsmen. Mr. Graeme enjoined me not to say a word to your mother about the quarrel."

Lucy.—"You have never told me exactly what did fall out. Wait a moment" (seeing that Mary

was about to respond), "I must have the horses put up."

That duty performed, "Now," said she, resuming her seat on the sofa at Mary's side, "tell me all about the fight."

Mary.—"Well, you know, the Abbé left your cousin Edward in Paris with the Count de Villieres. He was greatly perplexed to decide whether to reveal to his pupil what he had learned concerning his parentage. After much debate, he determined to entrust the matter to his brother's discretion. The Count had conceived the strongest affection for Edward, both for his own and his father's sake; had introduced him everywhere in the best circles of Parisian society, and had given him the benefit of his instructions in what pertained to military affairs, politics and belles-lettres, in all which he became thoroughly proficient. It was some months after the Abbé's departure before the Count imparted to him the secret of his birth. His first impulse was to go at once to England and seek an understanding with Sir William Markham, being convinced that the baronet knew who and what he was. From this course the Count dissuaded him, not deeming it opportune or politic at the moment; it would be more prudent, he thought, to wait until Sir William had gone home from London, where he was then attending in Parliament. By his advice Edward now assumed the name of Conrad, which belonged to his mother. Only to a few intimate friends of the Count was his history made known, and from them he received every mark of courtesy and consideration; so that altogether his

sojourn was as pleasant as he could desire Mr. Asburton, the Englishman of whom the Abbé tells, had spent the winter in Paris. He purposed returning home early in spring, and with the Count's consent it was arranged that Edward should accompany him. He resided in Cumberland, in the immediate neighborhood of Markham Castle. Soon after his arrival there, Edward sent a message to Sir William Markham requesting an interview. The baronet acceded to his request, but strange to say designated a certain retired place in the Park for their meeting. The selection of such an unusual spot awakened Mr. Asburton's suspicion; he advised Edward to take his sword with him, keeping it concealed beneath his cloak. The precaution was well-timed. Sir William Markham had a deadly purpose at heart in making that appointment. They had not exchanged many words before the baronet began to quarrel with him, madly, frantically. He was as one possessed of a devil. He heaped on Edward every vile and contumelious epithet; called him an impostor; taunted him with the spuriousness of his birth, and seeing him hesitate to draw his sword, scornfully denounced him as a coward. They fought; the combat was fierce and short. Sir William was overmatched in strength and dexterity. Easily putting aside a desperate lunge at his heart, Edward caught his adversary's weapon in his hand and broke it in twain; then he coolly ran him through the body and left him lying for dead on the ground."

Lucy turned pale and shuddered at this graphic recital of the duel. "Gracious," Mary, she ex-

claimed, "how can you speak in that cold blooded way of anything so horrible?"

"It would have been horrible, dear, had the baronet been killed," replied Miss Littleton, with imperturbable *sang-froid;* "it is not pleasant to have the life blood of a fellow-being on one's hand, even when it is shed in defence of one's own life. As it luckily happened, Sir William Markham only received the chastisement he justly merited. Let us hope that he has profited by the stern lesson."

Lucy.—"What became of cousin Edward after the fight?"

Mary.—"Of course he lost no time in effecting his escape from that dangerous locality. In this he was aided by Mr. Asburton. Provided by that gentleman with a trusty guide and a letter of introduction to the master of the *Katrine,* he reached Glasgow in safety, whence he at once embarked for America. He found Captain Dent, as was represented by his kind English host, to be a person in whom he could implicitly confide. On the voyage, which was long and stormy, the skipper, between whom and Mr. Asburton there appeared to be a mysterious tie, showed Edward every mark of civility and attention to his comfort, and although he was exceedingly reserved and guarded in his speech, it was evident that he had no good will for Sir William Markham. At Annapolis they parted with the warmest expressions of mutual regard. So, you see, I have a very substantial reason for believing that if anything has gone wrong with your cousin Edward, it cannot be laid to the charge of Captain Dent."

Lucy.—"Yes, so it seems; papa, too, has a high regard for Captain Dent and does not believe that he has been guilty of any wrong; yet I cannot forgive him for treating poor little Archie so cruelly."

Mary.—"There again, dear, I think you do him gross injustice. He is not implicated in that sad business, according to Mr. Osborn's account, any farther than to asseverate positively that the man was acting with his full knowledge and consent, and that he held himself accountable for the transaction to his employers in Glasgow. Besides, he pledged his solemn word to Mr. Osborn that so far from any mischief being intended to the boy, the sequel would show that it was the very best thing that could have happened for him."

Lucy.—"Well, I sincerely hope and trust that all will turn out as you seem to anticipate; but it is none the less provoking to be kept so long in suspense. Come, let's go and change our dresses. Stay; there's papa's step in the passage, perhaps he has news of the delinquents."

Mr. Graeme had been to escort Mr. Waddell part of the way on his homeward voyage, and was just come back. Lucy ran to meet him. He was grave and flurried.

"What is the matter, papa?" asked Lucy tenderly, as she helped him take off his wrappings, "you look worried."

"Oh, it's naething—naething worth mentioning," said he, trying to assume a careless tone, though his face plainly denoted that there was something

on his mind which he was debating the propriety of making known. "Where is Mary?"

"Here I am, sir," replied that young lady, coming forward; "if it concerns me, don't hesitate, I entreat, to speak freely, I can bear anything but suspense."

"Ye are a braw lassie, a vera braw lassie," said Mr. Graeme, kissing her and leading the way back to the parlor, the door of which he carefully closed.

"Weel, I dinna ken but it is sae vera bad, after all; aiblins they might hae consulted wi' me before ganging on sic a wild goose chase."

"They? Who, papa?" asked Lucy.

"Who? why the lads frae Woodbourne, to be sure," replied Mr. Graeme.

"Where have they gone?" eagerly inquired both the girls in a breath.

"Gane? Where else, but speerin' after the *Katrine* in your Cousin Ballantine's vessel, which they took without sae much as a beg your leave, sir. He's angry enough about it, I can tell you, and wi' reason; it was vera wrang, vera wrang."

"How did you hear this, papa?" asked Lucy, on whose pretty cheeks the lily and rose were battling for supremacy, while her accents grew perceptibly tremulous and the moisture gathered in her lovely eyes.

"From his own lips," replied her father; "I met him on the road as I was coming home."

Lucy looked from him to Mary. To her surprise, that young lady betrayed in her features anything else than displeasure. Her face was

flushed, and her eyes kindled with a glow of excitement. Intuitively she had taken in the meaning of the daring movement. It was apparent, too, to her keen perception that Mr. Graeme himself was secretly in sympathy with the adventurers, and was awkwardly endeavoring to mask his real feelings.

"Oh, Mr. Graeme, I am so glad they are gone; we shall soon learn all about the matter."

"Weel, weel," said the cautious old gentleman, shaking his head with an air of dubiety, "gin nae ill-luck betide—wha the deil is making that racket"—there was a loud knock at the hall-door—"go and see, bairn."

Lucy hastened to obey; but ere she reached the door, it flew open and revealed to their astonished gaze the form and figure of the person who was the subject of their intense solicitude. With an unchecked exclamation of delight, Mary rushed into her lover's extended arms, while Mr. Graeme, quickly divining the situation of affairs, promptly drew his daughter out of the room.

CHAPTER XII.

"NOW, Sir Truant," said Mary, when the transport of their meeting was over, "give an account of your eccentric conduct. What do you mean by raising such a hub-bub in our peaceful neighborhood, to say nothing of giving me such a terrible fright?"

"Were you then really alarmed about me, dearest?" naively inquired her lover.

Mary.—"To be sure I was, and with good reason. Do you know what you are accused of?"

Edward.—"Anything very wrong?"

Mary.—"In the first place, it is alleged that you aided and abetted one Captain Dent in the abduction of poor little Archie."

Edward (With affected indignation).—"Ridiculous; who says so?"

Mary.—"Never mind; it is moreover charged that you are nothing else but a spy, a sort of three-headed Cerberus of an emissary of the great triumvirate of iniquity, his Majesty of France, the Pope of Rome and the 'old boy!'"

Edward laughed. "Ah, I see now in what quarter the wind sits; the old tory has doubtless applied to Colonel Littleton for a warrant to appre-

hend me if found within the four seas. Seriously speaking, what did you think had become of me?"

Mary.—"What else could I reasonably conjecture, other than that you had met with an unexpected detention—possibly the Abbé had been prevented from keeping his appointment or had changed his plans and you had been suddenly summoned to go over the river. Of one thing I was well satisfied; you did not go off on the vessel."

Edward.—"There you mistook; I did go away on the *Katrine*, much against my will; in a word, I was made prisoner."

Mary.—"A prisoner; how dared they—"

Edward.—"Nay, dearest, be not disturbed; as it turned out there was no great harm done; yet it was a most inexplicable affair; a deep one, for a surety, is that Captain Dent."

Mary.—"Oh, do tell me all about it."

Edward.—"Well, you remember that when I wrote to the skipper of the *Katrine* to engage a passage for the Abbé, he very kindly offered to send a boat for him to St. Inigo's and bring him across the river in time for us to have our desired interview and leave-taking. When I arrived at Yeocomico, the good father was not there. I waited until nightfall and still he came not. Naturally, I grew impatient, and hiring a boat set out for the vessel. On the way I was met by the *Katrine's* yawl, which had been despatched for me. At the ship's side I was politely received by the mate and escorted to a room. The Captain, he said, was engaged with a passenger, and begged that I would excuse his seeming rudeness in not waiting upon

me at once. The gentleman I expected to meet was not yet come; they were looking for him every moment, the weather being so calm made it necessary to row every foot of the way. With this explanation he left me alone. Vexed by the delay, I sat down on one of the lockers and counted the minutes until an hour was gone. Then I rose and took a turn or two up and down the floor. Tired of this, I stopped, and began making an inspection and inventory of the apartment. It was different from the one which had been assigned to me before; it was cleanly, snug and comfortable enough, but it was entirely destitute of furniture, save a couple of lockers, two berths and a capacious cupboard. This last stood open, and on a shelf in it were refreshments, which had evidently been placed there for my use and behoof. Like a flash of lightning a gleam of suspicion shot through my brain. I rushed to the door. It was fast, locked, bolted and barred. I was in a prison; why and for what purpose I could not divine. Of one thing I soon became convinced; my jailor had effectually barred every avenue of escape; I was as safely bestowed as a bird in a cage. Realizing this disagreeable fact I became in an instant perfectly cool and collected, and resuming my seat on the locker, calmly thought the matter over. I had but one enemy in the world; this was his contrivance; no doubt the skipper had been suborned to kidnap me. Determined to make the best of circumstances I turned into one of the berths and went to sleep, and so sound was my slumber, thanks to the hard sides I had taken, that I was

only awakened by hearing a loud noise, which I discovered was made by the turnkey as he slammed to the door of my dungeon. The first object which greeted me was the open cupboard; in it I saw displayed a fresh and bountiful supply of *provant*, wine, biscuits, conserves, cold meats—victuals enough for a siege. At all events, they did not mean to starve me. Immediately I became conscious that the vessel was in motion, drifting slowly with the tide. Overhead all was as still as the grave; I lay in the berth and listened intently for hours; not a sound reached my ears save a smothered word or two of command and the occasional quick tread of a foot on deck. I had often read of the horrors of solitary captivity; such was to be my lot. Nevertheless, I was not greatly appalled at the thought. I rose, dressed, and with unimpaired appetite, attacked the store of provisions. Having breakfasted heartily, I diverted myself with walking quickly back and forth in my prison-house, wondering what was ahead of me and feigning an imaginary scene of extreme peril in which I was to act the part of a heroic martyr, and surmising, if the worst befel, what a lady, who shall be nameless, would do."

Mary.—"Were you not dreadfully scared?"

Edward.—"Strange to say, up to this moment I was not conscious of feeling the least sensation of alarm. The situation was so strange and unexpected that it awakened intense curiosity and set my fertile invention to work to an amazing degree. My character, as you know, has a decidedly romantic bent and I have an inveterate penchant for

adventure. The day wore on; it passed; another night came; the silence and solitude were unbroken; not a soul came near me. I began now, shame to say, to grow nervous and fidgety; the situation was becoming intolerably irksome; in spite of all I could do I lost control of my thoughts; they wandered wildly hither and thither, and all manner of phantoms chased through my brain. Then, indeed, I had a keen sense of the misery of solitary confinement, shut out from all converse with my fellow-man. It was so oppressively still. O, for a sound to break the awful monotony of silence. Hours rolled by during which I continued to pace the room with rapid strides. At last relief came. A shuddering tremor ran through the vessel; then a heaving motion up and down and now a bound forward; the wind had suddenly sprung up and the bark was speeding before it. I felt a thrill of joy at the change; here, at least, was life and motion. The wind increased to a gale; it grew very cold. To keep warm I went on walking my round until wearied with fatigue, I threw myself undressed into the berth and in a little while went to sleep. Awaking with a start I heard some one calling me by name. It was the mate; the captain, he said, had sent him to conduct me to his cabin. Hurriedly springing up and composing my disordered array I followed him. To my surprise it was near midday. The ship was lying at anchor in the middle of a large river and at her side was a schooner from which men were transferring hogsheads of tobacco. On reaching the cabin I found to my amazement and delight, not Dent, but the

Abbé. He embraced me warmly, and ere I had recovered from my surprise sufficiently to ask a question, 'Heaven, my son,' said he, 'has made me the instrument of preventing a great crime; how or by whom intended I am not at liberty to reveal. You must not blame the skipper; it was all a mistake on his part. You are free; all is arranged for your return to your friends. Time presses, in a little while we shall be again underway; I have only a few minutes in which to speak a parting word. I am going, as you are aware, on a voyage of uncertain duration. My good friend, Mr. Carroll, is fully advised of my wishes and plans as they affect your welfare. Confer freely with him and follow his advice. One thing more. There is a little boy on board who has been taken away from his friends in Virginia. Assure them, in my name, that he is in safe hands and cannot suffer harm. Some day they will know more of the matter.'

"With a fervent blessing he bade me adieu. I was lost in bewilderment, and when I regained my senses I found myself standing on the deck of the schooner staring vacantly at the *Katrine*, as with outstretched wings she went sailing down the river."

Mary.—"And you did not once see Captain Dent and don't know the meaning of his inscrutable behavior?"

Edward.—"No; he was all the time invisible. Well, to make an end of a long story, I was informed by the person in charge of the schooner that she belonged to a Colonel Gordon, who lived at a place called Merry Point, in the County of

Lancaster, whither he was instructed to convey me. Before doing so, however, he had to go a short way up the river for a load of corn. Consequently, I did not reach Merry Point until this morning. Colonel Gordon obligingly provided me with a horse and a guide, and here I am. By the way, I should have mentioned that as we were making the landing we passed another schooner on the deck of which were a group of persons, among whom I recognized the gigantic figure of Mr. Richard Alloway—*Que diable fait-il dans cette galère!*"

Mary laughed. "Well," said she, "it's an old saying, you know, one story is good until another is told. It is my turn now; prepare yourself for the greatest surprise you ever had in your life. But, no; I must keep you a while longer in suspense until I have made you acquainted with my very dear friends, the Graemes."

As she rose to leave the room a servant entered with lights and a letter, which he handed to her.

"This is for you," she exclaimed, "and is addressed to the care of Captain Delmay; who on earth is he?"

Edward gravely shook his head, as he took the extended packet. "Another mystery," said he; "perchance the letter will explain."

He hastily opened it. A small slip of paper fell out on the floor. He picked it up and read as follows: "My much wronged cousin: Mr. Alloway will tell you why I have gone away without seeing you, in obedience to my brother's request. His letter, now on the way (if you have not already

received it), will explain everything. The enclosed document rightfully belongs to you. The past cannot be recalled; I trust that its misdeeds will be atoned by the future.

"Ever your dutiful cousin,

"FREDERICK MARKHAM."

He turned to the document. It was Mr. Austin's letter to Sir William Markham. The first few lines caused his heart to throb tumultuously; but conscious that Mary was watching him closely, he commanded his features so as not to betray a hint of its contents until he had finished reading it. Then he heard a profound sigh of relief and in a voice which vibrated with a depth of feeling no words could express, "You may read it for yourself, darling," said he, giving her back the letter and turning away to conceal his emotion.

With eager eyes Mary rapidly devoured page after page of the closely-written epistle. It was a repetition of the sorrowful tale which Carleton had narrated to her on the night of the party; the missing link of a broken chain. But what avail was it, now that the rightful heir had renounced his claim to his father's hall.

Here the interest of our story ends. The game of hide and seek has been played. Nothing remains for us to do but to make our congées according to custom to the principal characters of the drama.

In less than a month they were married—were Captain Edward Conrad Markham, of the Continental Army, and Miss Mary Littleton, the fair consummate flower of Lowland beauty. The wedding

was a very exclusive affair and unattended with any of the pomp and circumstance which in those days almost invariably commemorated such joyous events. A good reason was assigned for thus violating the ancient usage, which was, that the bridegroom was in duty bound to report without delay at the head-quarters of the army before Boston. The invitations were confined to the Alloways and Graemes, there was very short commons of "cakes and ale," and good parson Smith did the rest for the happy pair in conformity with the sacramental requirements of the Established Church. Mary accompanied her husband as far as Philadelphia on his way to join the army, and having consecrated him with her prayers and tears to the holy cause of his country, returned to Clifton. Her future home was in Maryland—a beautiful villa on the Severn in the midst of that enchanting region which lies around Annapolis. But she was not destined to make her abode there for many long and anxious years. It was a painfully trying situation for a new-made bride to be placed in, to be separated from her husband before the honey-moon had waxed and waned; but it was her deliberate choice after duly reflecting upon the fatalities of war. She therefore bore her lot with cheerful equanimity, wrote the most tenderly brave and encouraging letters by every post to her young soldier, and occupied herself chiefly with assisting Lucy Graeme, who was making preparations for her own approaching nuptials. These took place in the early part of April and was projected on a scale of munificence which made ample amends for the previous public disappointment. The neighbors, young and

old, were there, and each guest brought with him his quota of hearty fun and wholesome mirth to give the entertainment the genuine flavor of old Virginia hospitable cheer. The "horse company" graced the occasion in full regimentals, the dashing cavalier Carleton shining in the van. But the toast of the whole hilarious party was our weather-beaten old friend, Mike Burke, who was in the finest possible feathers, and favored the company with an endless supply of irresistibly droll humor, interlarded with comical catches and grotesque capers, and drunk the bride's health and the bridegroom's health and everybody's health in large jorams of rum punch as a succedaneum for his native poteen, such as no other animal in the world could have stood up under but such another "leathering swash of an Irishman" under like inspiring circumstance. In the language of the Jenkins of the time, the wedding was a most enjoyable affair. Lucy looked as archly charming as could be, and sung her sweetest songs more divinely than ever before, and Mr. Richard Alloway was the happiest fellow who ever heedlessly ran his neck into the fatal noose. Mr. John Graeme was a miserable counterfeit of careless indifference in giving away the bride, and his best attempt at wit was a mal-apropos quotation of the proverb, which says a man may woo where he list, but he maun wed where his wind is; very apposite when applied to his son-in-law and himself, seeing that neither had courted but one woman in his life. As for the sweet hostess, her heart was really too full for utterance, and her thoughts were constantly straying far away to her absent darling.

One day shortly after the wedding, came a long letter from George Graeme to his mother. It was written from Markham Castle and contained two matters of especial interest. He had left college and was on his way home to share the destinies of his countrymen. The rest is told in his own words: "On yesterday Sir William invited me to walk with him. We went together to the old vault, in which the remains of so many of our family are deposited. There was an addition, and entirely new apartment, in which was a beautiful cenotaph of the purest white marble. He pointed silently to it and I read the names, with what emotion, you can imagine. They were those of Sir Henry Markham and his wife, Constance Conrad. And now, my dearest mother, the supreme wish of your heart has been fulfilled, and may your evening sky grow brighter and brighter with the smiles of love and joy and peace until it fades in the light of eternal happiness."

END OF PART II.

POSTSCRIPT.

If the reader has not discovered in the closing chapters of this narrative a commendable illustration of the art of gradual diminution—of "growing to a point,"—the failure to do so is owing entirely to his want of critical discernment. In the original design several more chapters were embraced, but, remembering that it is not good husbandry to carry all our eggs in one basket, we put aside a budget of materials for the sequel we have in contemplation. Whether the promise of such a work will ever be fulfilled depends upon the reception which is accorded our first venture in the overcrowded mart of fiction.

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